

**FY 2006
State Plan Update
for
Title I
and
Title VI, Part B**

**Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth
Michigan Rehabilitation Services
201 N. Washington Square
Lansing, Michigan 48933**

Effective Date: July 1, 2005

STATE PLAN UPDATE
FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM
AND

FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM
FISCAL YEAR 2006

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**STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM
AND
STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
PROGRAM**

STATE: MICHIGAN

AGENCY: MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC
GROWTH- MICHIGAN REHABILITATION SERVICES

AGENCY TYPE: GENERAL X BLIND COMBINED

SECTION 1: LEGAL BASIS AND STATE CERTIFICATIONS

- 1.1** The Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth (name of designated State agency or designated State unit) is authorized to submit this State plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended¹ and its supplement under title VI, part B of the Act.²
- 1.2** As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I, part B of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth (name of the designated State agency)³ agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State plan⁴, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁵, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary. Funds made available under section 111 of the Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under title I and the administration of this State plan.
- 1.3** As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI, part B of the Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State plan⁶, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁷, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary. Funds made available under title VI, part B are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the title I State plan.
- 1.4** The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding this State plan and its supplement.
- 1.5** The State legally may carry out each provision of the State plan and its supplement.
- 1.6** All provisions of the State plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
- 1.7** The Treasurer, State of Michigan (title of State officer) has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under this State plan and its supplement.
- 1.8** The Director (title of State officer) has the authority to submit this State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State plan supplement for supported employment services.
- 1.9** The agency that submits this State plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2005

1.10 The effective date of this State plan and its supplement is July 1, 2005.

/s/ David C. Hollister
(Signature)

David C. Hollister
(Typed Name of Signatory)

3/21/05
(Date)

Director
(Title)

¹ Public Law 93-112, as amended by Public Laws 93-516, 95-602, 98-221, 99-506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.

² Unless otherwise stated, "Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

³ All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

⁴ No funds under title I of the Act may be awarded without an approved State plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Act and 34 CFR part 361.

⁵ Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR part 361.

⁶ No funds under title VI, part B of the Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the title I State plan in accordance with section 625(a) of the Act.

⁷ Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR part 361, and 34 CFR part 363.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2005

TITLE I

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Applicants must review the requirements for certification regarding lobbying included in the regulations cited below before completing this form. Applicants must sign this form to comply with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." The certification shall be treated as a material representation of fact upon which reliance will be placed when the Department of Education decides to award the grant, cooperative agreement, loan or loan guarantee.

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

- (a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;
- (b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form – LLL, Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
- (c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants, contracts under grants and cooperative agreements, and subcontracts) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certifications.

NAME OF APPLICANT

PR/AWARD NUMBER AND/OR PROJECT NAME

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth - Michigan Rehabilitation Services Title I

PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

David C. Hollister, Director

SIGNATURE

DATE

/s/ David C. Hollister

3/21/05

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- (e) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form – LLL, Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
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As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certifications.

NAME OF APPLICANT

PR/AWARD NUMBER AND/OR PROJECT NAME

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth – Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Title VI, Part B

PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

David C. Hollister, Director

SIGNATURE

DATE

/s/ **David C. Hollister**

3/21/05

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2005

Name of Agency: Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth -
Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Attachment 4.1:

Designated State agency and designated State unit. (Sections 101(a)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.13)

On December 8, 2003, State Governor Jennifer Granholm issued Executive Order No. 2003-18. This order abolished the Michigan Department of Career Development and transferred Michigan Rehabilitation Services into a newly created State department named the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (MDLEG). MDLEG thus is now the designated State agency (DSA). MDLEG is a large state department and is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) was transferred whole to MDLEG and continues to be the named designated State unit (DSU) primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in Michigan, except those who are legally blind. MRS has a full time director; has a staff, at least 90% of whom are employed full time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; is located at an organizational level and has organizational status within the DSA comparable to that of other major organizational units of the DSA.

At a minimum, MRS has the following responsibilities that cannot be delegated to any other agency or individual: 1) all decisions affecting eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, the nature and scope of available services, and the provision of services; 2) a determination that an individual has ended participation in the vocational rehabilitation program and achieved an employment outcome after receiving vocational rehabilitation services; 3) policy formulation and implementation; and 4) allocation and expenditure of vocational rehabilitation funds.

On Feb 26, 2004, MDLEG published an action plan entitled Reshaping Michigan's Workforce. One of the action plan's priority actions is:

"DLEG Priority Actions

Modify the state's WIA plan and other employment and training policies to better support people with disabilities, immigrants,

older workers, and those in the corrections system for entry into and advancement in the labor market.

People with disabilities: Through its Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Michigan Commission for the Blind, and the Commission on Disability Concerns, DLEG will make a stronger commitment to better prepare individuals with disabilities for work through expanded residential programs, incentives for companies to hire people with disabilities and to provide assistance technologies and workplace supports, and incentives to areas of the state that have particularly high levels of unemployment of people with disabilities. DLEG will further work to raise employer awareness of the benefits of hiring disabled individuals to meet labor shortages within communities and firms, and to expand the capacity of Michigan Works! Service Centers and other service providers to offer training, counseling, and coaching."

In FY 2006, MRS programs and priorities will focus intently on the mission of assisting persons with disabilities to achieve employment and self-sufficiency. MRS's position within MDLEG is a real asset in helping to bring together skilled workers with disabilities with businesses that need their skills.

MRS entered into an agreement with Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) on February 2004, to effect a shift in the formula to distribute federal vocational rehabilitation funds between their respective programs. This agreement will shift the ratio of Title I funds from 88%(MRS), 12% (MCB), over a five (5) year period beginning October 1, 2004 to 85% (MRS), 15% (MCB), with a shift of three fourths (3/4) of a percent per year. The purpose of this shift in federal funds is to provide more equity in rehabilitation services to people with disabilities in Michigan.

Name of Agency: Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth -
Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Attachment 4.2: State independent commission or state
rehabilitation council

Summary of Input Provided by the State Rehabilitation Council

With intent of achieving the federal mandates, the Michigan Rehabilitation Council (MRC) attained the following outcomes during FY 2004:

1. As a result of holding four Business Meetings, the membership is an informed decision making body, which leads to continual improvement of the public vocational rehabilitation system in our state.
2. As a result of holding an annual Retreat, a Strategic Business Plan was created to provide credible direction with achievable goals and related objectives, to ensure that the federal mandates are achieved.
3. As a result of updating Attachment 4.2 of the annual renewal of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services State Plan, Rehabilitation Services Administration was informed of the MRC activities, customer input gained at focus groups, and accolades along with challenges made to Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) on six different areas related to their operations and services. In addition, the State Director response to 4.2 indicated agreement with the recommendations and affirmed the value of the partnership with the MRC.
4. As a result of correspondence sent to both State and Federal legislators regarding reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the MRC received responses from a number of different elected officials indicating their support of the public VR system.
5. As a result of the various partnership efforts throughout the past fiscal year, the MRC has increased its visibility and credibility amongst both statewide and local partners. At the same time, our organization has been able to work to ensure that the voice of the consumer with a disability is heard in a variety of venues.

Name of Agency:Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth -
Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Activities included: Member and staff representation with the State Wide Independent Living Council (SILC)retreat, business meetings and strategic workgroups; member and staff representation with the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC)Youth Leadership Forum steering and program committees; continued involvement with the MI Works! Association (MWA)by attendance at Board Meetings; participated in a number of Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC)activities; member of the Mi Jobs Coalition Project, with a focus on the implementation of the Freedom to Work Legislation; member of the E-Learnability Project which intends to establish a virtual disability community; attend the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC); member of the Transition Network Team (TNT)(hosted by MRS, Department of Community Health & Special Education); member of the statewide MI HI Connections Steering Committee; member of the work group established to update the Common Disability Agenda, the statewide disability community public policy statement on ten different issues; in partnership with the MDDC an Advocate Summit has been instituted which affords the opportunity for dialogue with the Governor's Disability Policy Advisor on a quarterly basis; and a member of the Disability Voice (DV) steering committee and local town hall(public forum)activities.

6. As a result of the established partnership with MRS, the Council's level of involvement has continued to expand. The state agency actively strives to include the MRC at various levels of the organization to assure the voice of the customer is heard and included into their decision making practices.

Our members and staff are committed to utilizing each opportunity within the MRS system to advocate on behalf of the customer. The regular activities include: meetings with the State Director, two representative members on the Senior Manager team, presentations at both District and Site Manager meetings, consultation with the Hearings Manager, Ombudsperson and field staff. In addition, the Council participated on internal MRS work groups focused on the following topics: college finances; customer orientation, service equity, E-Learning, cultural audit, services to minorities, innovation and expansion grants, Centers for Independent Living (CIL)statewide grant reviews, quality employment outcomes, and partnerships. As well, the MRC

was part of the interview team assigned to fill the Deputy and Division Director vacancies.

The Council presented at the Training Academy for new MRS staff, attends the quarterly SIG (Statewide Implementation Group) meetings, district office staff meetings, the Executive Team Strategic Planning Session related to the redesign of Business Services, and trainings on both ethics and personality disorders. The Council was represented during the creation and final editing process of the MRS Action Plan for submittal to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. The MRC has continued to educate MRS Staff about the Council, utilizing the agency hiring announcement as the opportunity to welcome each person to the agency and forwarding our marketing materials.

The Council held its Spring 2004 Business Meeting at the Michigan Career & Technical Institute (MCTI - the MRS Vocational Technical Training and Residential school), gaining Public Comment from the Student Council President, MCTI Staff and the Kalamazoo area CIL. In addition, the day prior to the meeting, two Student Forums were held, resulting in input from nearly 70 students on issues related to MRS in general, as well as the residential training school.

8. As a result of the MRC involvement with Project Excellence (a grant funded by MRS to Michigan State University, Department of Education, Office of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, with a mutually agreed upon contractual charge of managing the MRS program evaluation component), the membership and staff have been active participants in the agency's Customer Satisfaction Survey process. MRC input has been incorporated into the various aspects of the data collection practice. The MRC is also represented on the Project's Advisory Council.

9. As a result of a MRC grant proposal request to MRS, a scholarship project was established to support 33 customers to attend and/or exhibit at the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference in November 2004. The MRC has effectively managed the application and selection process. In addition, the Council plans to provide personal support and group facilitation to assure a successful conference experience for each customer. We expect that this professional development opportunity will

provide the customers with an experience which broadens their knowledge base about the field of rehabilitation, along with creating new relationships.

The MRC expects to create a mechanism which will utilize the vast resources present in the customers who received the conference scholarships. The intent will be to create a "Leadership and Advocacy Resource Team", utilizing these customers as the core statewide group to learn and/or enhance their: advocacy, VR systems change, and self empowerment skills. The impact for the agency and members of the disability community is significant in that creating a true partnership of this kind has advantages locally, statewide and nationally.

10. As a result of the MRC involvement with training and/or conference opportunities, the Council Mission has been successfully marketed, reaching new populations. Activities have included: the annual Michigan Rehabilitation Conference (hosted a public forum, exhibit, and participated in the conference), the MI Works! Employment & Assistive Technology Conference; the Disabilities Training Forum - Building Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities sponsored by the Department of Labor - Region V; the UCP of MI and the MDDC Transportation Summit; Michigan League for Human Services Public Policy Forum, Non Profit Association of Michigan Conference, the Self Help for Hard of Hearing Conference (attended and exhibited), the Michigan Transition Conference (attended and exhibited), and the Michigan Education Career Conference.

11. As a result of a successful Budget negotiation with the state agency, the fiscal year 2005 grant was awarded for: \$290,581.00 (this includes the MRC Scholarship Project grant amount of \$27,527.00)

12. As a result of diligent advocacy efforts and the establishment of a productive working relationship with the newly elected Governor's Appointment Specialist, federally mandated positions to the Council were appointed (the Client Assistance Project (CAP) and the Parent Education and Training Center). In addition, the member serving to represent the American Indian 121 Project was reappointed.

13. As a result of correspondence to the Michigan Governor and Superintendent of the Department of Education, the Assistant Director of Special Education was named to fill the Special Education vacancy mandated by the federal legislation. We expect that this individual will serve to increase the partnership opportunities with this state agency.

14. As a result of maintaining the MRC office in an autonomous manner, the daily business operations were managed in an efficient and effective manner so that the membership activities were supported leading to the achievement of the mandates. The annual operating budget for fiscal year 2004 was \$258,459.00 and is run through a non-profit agency serving as the fiduciary and employer of record. The work of the Council membership is supported by three staff, two at full-time (Executive Director and Program Manager) and one at part time status (Executive Assistant). This funding also provides support for the MRC operational needs, which includes Member travel related expenses.

15. As a result of correspondence sent to the Governor asking her to preserve the current state funding received by MRS, her response revealed that though her desire was to uphold our request, the current economic climate in Michigan may not allow this to happen.

16. As a result of the guidance provided by the MRC Finance Committee, a separate 501(c) (3) organization - the MVRC, Inc. (Michigan Vocational Rehabilitation Council) was established. The intent is to provide funding opportunities that allow the development of additional programs to augment the employment services for individuals with disabilities in Michigan.

17. As a result of the annual review and update to the MRC Bylaws, the organizational structure of the Council was strengthened.

18. As a result of individualized new MRC member orientations, a basic understanding of the MRC purpose and related activities was gained. It is expected that the new member participation will enhance the overall functioning of the organization.

19. As a result of the agency's internal scan of Orientation

Services and the MRC Orientation Project being implemented, MRS began actively working to redesign this service provision for statewide equity, consistency, accuracy, and customer ease.

The MRC Orientation Project recommendations challenged the current system and have been accepted by the agency. It is anticipated that within the next year, the new Orientation modalities will be in place and the Council will seize the opportunity to critique the new services. Details of this project can be found in the VR Systems Change Section.

20. As a result of the efforts of the MRC Council Analysis, Review and Development Committee, the Policies and Procedures (relevant to internal operations for the Council) have been reviewed, edited, and organized into one Policy document. This has streamlined the internal management mechanisms for the Council, leading to increased efficiency at all levels of the organization.

The following categories are being reported on for two purposes: To expand on the Accomplishment Section highlights and to provide details relevant to strategic planning efforts.

MEMBERSHIP

It is hoped that the current members who desire reappointment will be given serious consideration by the Governor. We depend on the experience and history that these members provide to the organization. Their talents serve well the education of any newly appointed members as well as providing mentoring opportunities which develops new leaders. The MRC continues to have a minimum of 3 or maximum of 10 vacancies. We are out of compliance with the Governor's Workforce Board and the Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) positions as detailed within the federal mandates. We look to the agency and department for support to the Governor's Office with regard to our needed appointments and reappointments. We recognize that the low number of our membership population challenges our overall effectiveness.

The Council has worked diligently to recruit new members. We have found that applicants who initially express interest in appointment, later determine that they are not able to make the time commitment needed to fulfill membership responsibilities.

The MRC surpasses a majority of members with varied disability characteristics, yet is deficit in racial diversity. We also need to expand geographic representation from: the northern Lower Peninsula, the Upper Peninsula, the west side and the southeast corridor of our state.

STRATEGIC ORGANIZATION

A Strategic Planning Retreat was held in September 2004. The membership revised their current Strategic Business Plan, along with confirming the MRC Mission and Vision statements.

The Fiscal Year 2005 MRC Strategic Business Plan includes the following three (3) goals and objectives, designed with the intention of creating committee work plans leading to the achievement of the mandates.

Goal 1 - Impact positive changes in VR Services. Objectives: 1. Participate in, evaluate, record, follow-up and disseminate information to Membership and public on MRS services and programs including: Service Delivery Process, Staff and Customer Job Retention, Quality of Employment, Customer Satisfaction, State Plan, MCTI, and Customer Orientation.

Goal 2 - Enhance visibility of VR services to Michigan citizens with disabilities. Objectives: 1. Create/select method and instruments to report and interact with customers regarding employment. 2. Conduct outreach activities with the American Indian Community. 3. Plan, pilot and conduct CIL Focus Groups.

Goal 3 - Establish and maintain effective partnerships to improve VR services. Objectives: 1. Create opportunities for participation of all statewide partners to MRC meetings, i.e., MRS, CRP's, Consumer Involvement Councils (CIC), CIL's Arc's, and explore new forums to hear counselor and other service provider issues. 2 Identify & assess status of current partnerships and the Council representative. Specifically: Define partnerships and their value & objectives, target partnerships, update marketing tools, and outreach to disability specific groups. 3. Explore partnerships with non-rehabilitation related organizations that have a positive impact on the MRC Mission, i.e.-employers. 4. Develop and implement a program to train Council Members to participate in educational legislative activities.

In an effort to support the above goals and objectives, the MRC committee structure was redesigned to include the following five (5) workgroups: Executive; Finance; Partners and Legislature; Service Delivery Effectiveness and State Plan. We expect that the expertise, enthusiasm and dedication of the membership will drive the success of the Strategic Business Plan goals at the committee level.

CONSUMER INPUT

Disability Voice

The DV partnership effort includes the MRC, the SILC, the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC), the Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB), the MCDC, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services (MPAS), the MDDC, MRS, and representatives from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Each organization works to include public input into their respective state plans and/or annual reports.

This partnership effort results in town hall meetings scheduled at various locations around the state. A local community group is responsible for the planning effort with support and assistance from the DV members. The Council views this activity as a great resource of citizen input, as well as an empowering experience for the community members.

As a result of budget reductions in local communities and within the statewide disability organizations, there were no Town Hall meetings held during this fiscal year. Regardless, this partnership effort continues to look at innovative methods to facilitate the success of a number of consumer driven meetings during the upcoming fiscal year.

Michigan Rehabilitation Conference

MRC has been an active participant in the annual Michigan Rehabilitation Conference hosted by the Michigan Rehabilitation Association and MARO Employment and Training. For the November 2003 conference, the MRC was a member of the Program Committee, staffed an exhibit, and hosted a public forum to obtain feedback on the state VR system. This input opportunity was facilitated by MRC Staff and Members and attended by a diverse audience of approximately 45 people. The Forum was entitled: "Tell Us What

You Think About Public VR Services in Michigan". The four (4) questions utilized as stimulus with the audience and a summary of responses are as follows:

1. What does MRS do?

Breaks down barriers, educates, develops programs, works for people with disabilities, assists with employment services and education, job development, provide resources, transportation and equipment for work, empowerment and Ticket to Work.

2. What are the positives and strengths of MRS?

Communicate well, good facilitators, counselors are positive and willing to listen, explore many avenues and work with co-workers and community for other needs, counselors becoming more accepting of Person Centered Planning and some regions of MRS orchestrating things like "Work-Net".

3. What are the challenges for MRS?

Not enough counselors, as often times it seems like people are falling through the cracks, thinly spread between rural counties, people waiting too long for services, government agencies not well-informed amongst themselves, limited budgets, high unemployment, counselors need way to exchange information amongst themselves, clarity on what populations served and transportation.

4. What should MRS look like in 5 years?

Assistive Technology person at each office to help with consumers, actual development of jobs, rural areas get permanent counselors, people get services as they come in- not put on a waiting list, transportation, vocational assessment, job readiness, database created so that services are not duplicated (Statewide via all agencies), more MCTI campuses-especially for kids right out of High School, more accessibility to vocational facilities in the state, work with ISD's with transportation issues (utilize ISD busses downtimes), and a phone referral-ie: 211 for agencies.

MCTI Student Forums

In cooperation with MRS and the staff and administration of Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI), the MRC conducted two Focus Groups on campus in late May 2004. A total of 73 students participated in two sessions of 2.5 hrs each.

The individuals who attended represent 21% of the student population enrolled at that time (total enrollment figure as of April 2004.) An Instrumented Group Interview technique was utilized to conduct the Focus Groups. The Council is in the process of finalizing their report which has summarized the student input from the following three (3) topics: Getting Your Case Opened with MRS; Services and MCTI; and Employment and Independence. As a result of the findings, six (6) recommendations have been determined. Once approved by the membership, a meeting will be scheduled with the MCTI Administration, MCTI Student Council and MRS Executive Team for review and discussion. It is expected that the recommendations will result in improvements to the MRS service delivery system both at the district office and the training school.

PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout the past year, the MRC has maintained a focus on statewide partnership activities with the SILC, Michigan Association of Centers for Independent Living (MACIL), MDRC, MCDC - Youth Leadership Steering Committee, the MDDC, the Legislative Disability Caucus and the Disability Voice work group. In the year ahead, the Council plans on increasing their knowledge base of partner activities by asking for their participation at quarterly MRC Meetings. The outcome should allow the membership opportunity to determine areas in which to expand partnership efforts. In addition, the MRC Partner and Legislature Committee intends to create a marketing mechanism for use with CILs and the Legislature.

VR SYSTEMS CHANGE

MRC Orientation Project

The purpose of this project was two fold: To fulfill the responsibilities of the MRC under the WIA, ensuring effective service delivery within the public VR program and to assist the MRS Short Term Orientation Work Group by collecting data to implement change that the Agency had identified as necessary, in the orientation process.

To achieve these purposes, the MRC developed a two part project. The first part was designed to determine the similarities and differences in MRS Customer Orientations across the state, while also gathering staff viewpoints on the changes needed for this

service provision. The second part encompassed MRC Members and staff attending orientations to gain a better understanding of the customer experience at orientation.

The findings of the first part of the project indicate that there are vast differences in orientations across the state. Notably in the areas of: Basic information and materials provided to customers, length of time of orientations, information customers are required to bring, and when and how customers are scheduled to attend orientations.

Consistent with part one of the Project, findings from the second phase revealed that there are vast differences in information communicated at orientations across the state. The Council utilized the agency's own MRS Orientation Policy as a guide, with the most variance seen in: The requirement to use other sources of funds before the Agency pays for services, client contribution, informed choice, order of selection, rights and responsibilities, equal employment opportunities and the availability of the CAP. The one strong and consistent piece of information communicated at each orientation is the Agency focus on employment.

As a result of our findings, eleven (11) recommendations were made to MRS, which in turn were upheld by the agency's Executive Team. The recommendations included: 1 - Develop a mechanism to ensure consistency of information provided to customers across the state, ensuring that all items identified in the MRS Orientation Policy are included, and allowing for additional information specific to the office; 2 - Include in the Agency Orientation Policy the information customers are required to provide when they attend an orientation and under what circumstances an individual who has previously received services is required to attend an orientation in order to re-open their case; 3 - Include a consistent message regarding roles and responsibilities at every orientation to ensure that customers have a better understanding of the process and next steps, further increasing their ability to make more and better informed choices; 4 - The Agency should create a process for statewide consistency when Counselor assignment takes place, to ensure that customers experience a smooth and efficient transition from orientation to eligibility determination; 5 - The MRS Substance Abuse Screening Instrument should not be

utilized prior to a customer's first meeting with their Counselor; 6 - Establish more consistency in Customer Orientation by determining what information will be presented at Orientation versus at the initial counseling appointment; 7 - Each MRS Office should evaluate the physical accessibility of their office; 8 - Individuals with significant disabilities, referred by Community Mental Health Providers were not present at the MRS group orientations. MRS should evaluate why this population is not represented at the orientation, as well as how and if they are being informed of the Agency topics required to be communicated at the Orientation; 9 - MRS should evaluate correlations between the length of the orientation session and customer outcomes; 10 - Scheduling orientations later in the morning or afternoon would allow customers greater opportunity to arrive at the orientations, when considering the challenges present in the public transportation system; 11 - MRS should determine specific information customers are required to be informed of regarding Ticket to Work, and incorporate the information into procedure for the orientation process.

As a result of the MRC and MRS partnership effort that evolved in the redesign of Customer Orientation, a workshop was planned by the partners for presentation at the November 2004 Michigan Rehabilitation Conference.

MRS FOCUS AREAS:

1 - Strategic Partnership

The Council benefits from a mutually respectful relationship with the Agency. The State Director has set the tone with regard to the value added to their organization as a result of the MRC and MRS partnership. She has also demonstrated her intentions of prioritizing a renewed agency wide commitment to inclusion and diversity with customers, staff and the disability community. Under her leadership, the agency has regained a focus on the MRS Mission, all while expanding and strengthening relationships within the business and disability advocacy community. The MRC is aware that this organizational shift has presented challenges to the effective management of MRS. However, a proactive statewide team approach appears to be redirecting these challenges into opportunities. The primary benefit is seen in a service delivery system focused on quality employment placement for customers. In addition, the Council is pleased that MRS

continues to exceed the requirements of their federally mandated Performance Indicators, as we recognize that this has a direct impact on the provision of services for citizens with disabilities.

We expect to maintain our inclusion in the agency planning, policy making, evaluation, and outreach activities as described within the Rehabilitation Act. We recognize the importance of obtaining MRS operational information related to district office ADA compliance site reviews, personnel data, and RSA 911 reports if we are to continue to be an effective partner. We anticipate the consistent receipt of this information in the upcoming year, so that we can offer appropriate feedback to MRS.

2 - Consumer Input, Needs and Satisfaction

Project Excellence (PE) continues to demonstrate their worth to the agency through a myriad of both new and ongoing evaluation projects which promotes an environment of continuous improvement for MRS. The MRC affirms MRS identified focus topics for study by the PE staff during the new fiscal year. We strongly continue our support of the agency's funding commitment to PE as the external source for program evaluation projects. It is evident that the project provides current data relative to enhancing the MRS service delivery system.

The Council has maintained an active presence in the MRS Customer Satisfaction Survey efforts through ongoing consultation with PE staff. This has included: creating the instrument, determining which populations to survey and reviewing the quarterly and annual reports.

One of the MRC recommendations made to MRS subsequent to the review of the annual report in August 2003 was to encourage the development of a telephone survey modality. The Council was pleased to see this recommendation implemented and for the opportunity to review the findings. The response rate was low (13.3%) due in part to the fact that 57 of the 75 customers randomly sampled were unable to be contacted. PE listed some reasons respondents were unable to be contacted including, "incorrect telephone numbers, respondents no longer lived at the home address, and respondents may have elected not to return the telephone message left by PE staff."

In response to the challenges which surfaced when trying to contact a larger percentage of the random sample, the Council has recommended that MRS, through its relationships with PE and the MRC, facilitate statewide focus groups in order to obtain satisfaction information from the population targeted for the telephone surveys (closed cases with employment outcome), as well as customers whose cases have been closed prior to IPE development. It is anticipated that holding focus groups in targeted locations, such as homeless shelters, faith based organizations, CIL's, veterans groups and neighborhood service organizations would reduce the number of non respondents seen in the telephone survey process, as the Agency is engaging in more direct and targeted outreach. The customer satisfaction data obtained at these focus groups could be utilized to grow the Agency's effectiveness as it continues to set the example as a leader in the country for the provision of the public VR system.

The Council understands that the Needs Assessment findings are being reviewed by MRS in concert with PE for future direction in agency planning. We believe that this effort should provide additional insights for the MRS staff through a more global perspective of the challenges and needs of persons with disabilities as they strive for a quality lifestyle. The implications of this opportunity should serve well both the internal agency environment along with the service delivery component.

As has been recommended in previous years, we challenge the RSA to advocate for the expansion of data collection within the U.S. Census with regard to disability characteristic and resulting impact on the quality of life. This type of data collection could be utilized in a variety of venues, such as effective data driven marketing of the public VR system. In addition, the baseline data may provide the circumstance for a more "streamlined" statewide comprehensive needs assessment by each state at a significantly reduced expenditure.

3 - Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth Action Plan
The newly elected Michigan Governor (November 2002) effected a reorganization of state government. One of the new departments is the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth - MDLEG. As one of the Bureaus to be included under MDLEG, the MRS staff have vigorously worked to establish themselves as a credible

organization within one of the largest state departments in Michigan history. It is evident that MRS has gained the respect of their MDLEG colleagues as they are actively involved in many levels of Departmental activities.

The Council welcomed the opportunity to participate in the MRS Action Plan review session. This meeting was facilitated by the MRS Staff Team of Ambassadors to MDLEG, who presented the rough draft of the Action Plan for critique by the Executive Team members and the MRC Executive Director. Though this plan was designed to reflect the work to be completed by MRS, the expectation was that all aspects would be in alignment with the values and vision of the MDLEG. A review of the final MDLEG/MRS Action Plan revealed that it has done an admirable job of supporting both the Department and Agency Mission and Values.

4 - Human Resources

The MRC is encouraged by the findings that the MRS personnel characteristics related to minority and disability populations surpass the demographic percentages for Michigan. Even so, the Council continues to expect that the agency will develop and affect a recruitment strategy directed towards hiring a greater number of staff with disabilities and of racial diversity.

The Council is encouraged by the expansion of the Staff Training Academy from basic MRS orientation to Special Population segments. Training has included topics such as ethics and personality disorders. The Council understands that the internal E-Learn system is underused by the field staff, due to time constraints. It is unfortunate that creative problem solving has not resulted in a mechanism which encourages staff to utilize this professional development resource. We strongly support the agency commitment to providing ongoing training opportunities for their staff, as we believe that the experiences have a positive impact on the customers being served.

The MRC understands that the MRS, RSA Training Grant will need to be renewed within the next fiscal year. The Council would welcome the opportunity to join the agency staff dedicated to the grant application process.

5 - Service Delivery System

The Council maintains its belief that the practice of informed choice is one of the most crucial aspects of the entire rehabilitative process between the customer and counselor. We recognize that the incorporation of this practice continues to evolve. For this reason, we support the continuation of including this topic in future trainings for managers and case carrying staff. We are pleased at the creation of the on line Informed Choice course available to all staff via E-Learn.

The establishment of the MRS Short Term Orientation Work Group proved to be an excellent compliment to the MRC Orientation Project. The MRC Project outcomes are detailed earlier in this attachment. This focused effort clearly depicts the partnership which exists between the Agency and the Council. It is important to note that the creation of a Customer Handbook along with a PowerPoint presentation focused on the Orientation process should establish the needed consistency for information sharing with customers across the state. Through the use of these two new modalities, customers will receive the same message about MRS whether in Marquette or Southfield. As well, each service site has the flexibility to include information which pertains to their specific community.

The agency has indicated that they expect to implement the two new Orientation modalities during FY 2005. Following six months of use of these new service efforts, the MRC members or staff will return to each District Office location to attend and review the redesigned Customer Orientation experience. Our findings will be summarized for reporting purposes to the membership and the agency.

As we consult with MRS field staff, we have been reminded of the wealth of information regarding creative and "out of the box" practices that are effectively utilized within a district, but are rarely shared or documented outside of that venue. The MRC is committed to working with the agency in an effort to collect this data for use in marketing the agency (locally, statewide, and nationally) and expanding MRS staff practices. The Services to Minorities workgroup has made admirable progress in assessing staff competencies and office environments in an effort to generate related operational recommendations. It is anticipated that equity issues and skill levels will increase, as staff training efforts are expanded to enhance competencies.

The MRS district offices are either totally or partially co-located within the MI Works! One Stop Service Centers. It is hoped that a future partnership effort between the MRC and MRS will be the development of a strategy in which the Council can better advocate for the persons with disabilities being served at the centers.

The MRC is quite pleased at the appointment of the MRS State Director to the newly formed Governor's Workforce Board, which had been recommended by the Council in the past four State Plan updates. Since MRS management staff have clearly demonstrated their value to their local Workforce Board, we are hopeful that these governing bodies will continue to include this credible partner.

The Council benefits from a productive relationship with the MRS ombudsperson and hearings manager, who is an MRC ex-officio member. Quarterly reports are offered to the membership regarding systemic issues and any formal hearings held. During the past fiscal year, there were three hearings and one civil action. MRS received a decision on a case that had been pending for a year and a half in which a customer appealed to circuit court. That decision sustained the Agency's decision to terminate the services to the customer.

The CAP Director was finally appointed to the MRC in early Fall 2004. The input garnered from the CAP related to the MRS service delivery system has had great impact on the MRC committee dedicated to enhancing the equity, effectiveness, and quality of agency services.

The state agency indicates that it is able to continue serving all order-of-selection categories. As the demand for MRS services continues to increase and the state funding levels decrease, this has forced the agency to garner additional cash match agreements to secure the available federal funds. The Council's concern regarding this shift is that this paradigm dilutes the general service funds and targets monies to specific populations.

The Order of Selection Position paper authored and approved by the membership nearly three years ago, will be reviewed for

possible revision. Our current membership stance is that we do not support the agency enacting an order of selection with VR services in Michigan. In the event that the MRC document is updated, a meeting for presentation and dialogue with the agency will take place.

6 - Community Collaboration and Grants

The MRC recognizes that MRS is strongly committed to their ongoing collaborative efforts as established with the independent living partners of MACIL and SILC. The agency has been consistent in their support regarding the expansion of the CIL network, so that a number of emerging Centers have gained financial support as they represent geographic regions of Michigan which were previously underserved by independent living services. We understand that equity in funding is an issue that is being reviewed by MRS and the CIL network in an effort to resolve the situation.

In the past year, MRS changed one of their Administrative positions to include a 50% dedication to IL services. It is evident that this addition has been an advantage for the CIL network, as technical assistance has increased, with planning efforts resulting in clearer outcomes. The MRC will continue to support this effort.

The MRS Consumer Cadre was established to ensure that the agency is represented with as many statewide partners as possible. The four staff who contribute 25% of their position to this effort need an internal mechanism to share their activities with the agency on a statewide basis.

The agency has established itself as a lead partner with expanded service efforts for two typically underserved populations of adjudicated youth and ex offenders. The MRC believes that the agency service experience with both of these populations should enhance successful outcomes.

The Council is supportive of the use of I&E grants for local community or statewide efforts. As well, grants to community rehabilitation programs (CRP) reflect the priority MRS has given to fund local community programs. The MRC views both of these funding streams as having the propensity to greatly impact the resources available within a given locale. The MRC is pleased

that PE has become involved in the statewide grants review process, as the Council had made this recommendation in previous State Plans. We believe that this effort should result in a system that makes the most effective use of funding through outcome driven data collection. We continue to advocate for the publication and marketing of grant achievements.

The agency hosted a Partnership Forum, with guests derived across the state from CILs, Community Mental Health organizations, and MARO Employment & Training members (Community Rehabilitation Providers). The MRS management and Central Office Administrative staff were also in attendance. The Agenda included an overview of the function of each partner, along with small group sessions which captured ideas on both successes and opportunities for growth within these partnerships. This approach, though non-traditional, was well received by those in attendance and provides a basis from which to design future meetings.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

After summarizing the MRC Accomplishments and offering our input on the various aspects of the MRS system, it is evident that the public VR system in Michigan upholds their Principles as they work to serve people with disabilities.

Our recommendations to MRS have included:

1 - We look to agency support on a MRC proposal to create a "Leadership and Advocacy Resource Team", utilizing the Customers who benefited from the MRC Scholarship Project.

2 - We look to agency support on the MRC visiting each District Office location to review and assess the implementation of the new Orientation modalities.

3 - We look to agency and departmental support with the Governor's Office with regard to the needed MRC appointments and reappointments.

4 - We look to agency support which ensures that we are in receipt of MRS operational information related to district office ADA compliance site reviews, personnel data, and RSA 911 reports.

5 - We look to agency support to implement focus groups in various locations around the state. The result should be seen in the opportunity to obtain satisfaction information from the population targeted for the Customer Satisfaction telephone surveys (closed cases with employment outcome), as well as customers whose cases have been closed prior to IPE development.

6 - We look to agency support through the establishment and sharing of their recruitment strategy directed towards hiring a greater number of staff with disabilities and of racial diversity.

7 - We look to agency support to be afforded the opportunity to be involved with the renewal application process for the RSA Training Grant.

8 - We look to agency support to utilize the MRC in an effort to collect "best practice" data for use in marketing the agency (locally, statewide, and nationally).

9 - We look to agency support to determine a partnership mechanism in which the MRC is included in advocating for persons with disabilities within the MI Works! One Stop Service System.

10 - We look to agency support with an annual MRC and MRS meeting scheduled to discuss the implications of Order of Selection.

11 - We look to agency support in the creation of an internal mechanism to educate the MRS staff on the activities of the Consumer Cadre.

In the ten year MRC history, the relationship with the state agency has progressed from that of a citizen group serving to "rubber stamp" MRS efforts, to an organization which is included in most aspects of the system as their input has been deemed valuable. It is evident that the established, yet continually evolving relationship between the MRC and MRS is a partnership based on mutual respect and trust. This paradigm shift has served to ensure that the customer voice is "at the table" when practices, future planning, procedures, and/or policies are being discussed and decided upon.

The passage of the 1992 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act created the State Rehabilitation Council. Since that time, MRS has demonstrated their support of this federal mandate by negotiating an annual MRC Budget which is independent from the

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agency and adequately provides for staffing, member needs, and operational expenses. The MRC believes that this organizational circumstance reveals how the spirit and vision of Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, has been implemented in Michigan. Further, it demonstrates how MRS has seized the opportunity to support a consumer driven Council which leads to their receipt of credible consumer input. On numerous occasions, the State Director has stated her appreciation for our candid challenges of the MRS system, along with our acclamations for their successes. Though the agency can appear to be a formidable bureaucracy, their ongoing commitment to the Council is evident. They utilize our input as a gain to their organization, all while embracing our autonomy and our resulting accomplishments. This partnership effort should serve as a national model of how other state VR agencies can not only establish, but empower their SRC to be one of their strongest allies.

We recognize that the true benefit of the MRC and MRS partnership reveals itself in a service delivery system created to ensure that Michigan citizens are receiving services which strive to assure their dignity, their choice, and their acquisition of a quality employment outcome.

STATE AGENCY RESPONSE:

Michigan Rehabilitation Services appreciates the significant work of the Michigan Rehabilitation Council in reviewing and commenting on the 2006 State Plan Update and related policies and procedures.

MRS extensively agrees with the Michigan Rehabilitation Council report and recommendations of the Michigan Rehabilitation Council. While the many, varied, and sustained activities of the Council are well reflected, some of their recommendations warrant further comment.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services appreciates the effective and mutually respectful relationship we have with the Michigan Rehabilitation Council. It is obvious from the comprehensiveness of their report of FY 2004 activities and current recommendations, MRC takes its responsibility for partnering with MRS very seriously.

MRS is most appreciative of MRC's assistance in the following areas:

- Assuring numerous opportunities for dialogue, joint planning and problem solving. Although the schedules of both directors have grown, and regular meetings are often pre-empted, opportunities continue for expanded staff participation. MRS values MRC's input so much that the MRC executive director has been invited to participate in monthly strategic planning meetings.
- Representing VR and persons with disabilities in the development and publication of the state's Common Disability Agenda document and participating in the state's Disability Caucus.
- Increased involvement in MCTI evaluation and continuous improvement efforts.
- Input in developing MRS's Action Plan in alignment with the departmental action plan and helping to communicate this plan to partners and customers.
- Advancing the creative idea for customer sponsorship at our state level rehabilitation conference, with subsequent proposal for leadership and mentor development.
- Adapting to a new fiduciary (MARO Employment and Training) and improving all financial and administrative procedures.
- Submitting a letter of support to our governor to urge state level support for Vocational Rehabilitation not be reduced.
- Active engagement in revisions to our orientation procedures and processes. Detailed recommendations were made to MRS, most of which were approved and implemented.
- Supporting and promoting MRS efforts to improve equity of resources to Michigan's Centers for Independent Living.

As regards MRC's recommendations, MRS supports them in principle or concept, but several require further discussion and joint planning to implement.

Specifically,

Recommendation #4 - MRS needs to better understand what specific data is requested by MRC which is not currently furnished.

Recommendation #5 - Recent discussion of the use of focus groups for customer satisfaction revealed limited success with previous efforts. MRS staff have been assigned to review these experiences and work with MRC and our evaluation unit to propose more successful models.

Recommendation #8 - Sharing best practice data has been recommended for several years. MRS is collaborating with the Developmental Disability Council to conduct a forum this year for this purpose. Further discussion with MRC would be helpful to develop other companion strategies.

As our partnership with MRC continues to grow, we look forward to continued emphasis on the following issues:

1. Proactive, collective advocacy on critical VR and disability issues and legislation.
2. Leadership development and use of customer advocates and mentors.
3. Review and proposal for Order of Selection given continuing increased demand for services and perpetually threatened resources.
4. Advocacy for exemption from hiring freeze to allow MRS to use federal funding to hire much needed staff.
5. Assistance with recruitment and hiring of minorities and persons with disabilities.
6. Continued infusion of informed choice principles and practices.
7. Facilitation of creative, innovative problem solving and service delivery and sharing effective models.
8. Increased input of MRS executives in the development of MRC's strategic plan.
9. Increased opportunity for input and visibility of MRS in the development and promotion of the Common Disability Agenda.
10. Increased input and active support to MRS's Action Plan.

In summary, MRS greatly values its partnership with MRC and looks forward to continually enhancing this partnership to collectively improve quality outcomes for persons with disabilities in Michigan.

Attachment 4.6(a)(3): Identification of the Types of
Activities to Be Carried out under a
Waiver of Statewideness.

MRS has developed a policy for the development of activities to be carried out under a waiver of statewideness, which applies to our Cooperative Cash Match Agreements. This policy is based on Section 101(a) of the Rehab Act and 34 CFR 361.26 and 361.28 regulations. The MRS state policy includes the following criteria:

- (1) The non-federal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization, or individual;
- (2) The goal of the provision of services is to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments or from particular ethnic populations that have traditionally been underserved by the agency, and other target populations identified in the Rehabilitation Act, such as students with disabilities needing transition services;
- (3) We request a waiver of statewideness on an annual basis in order to provide services to such target groups as described above. The MRS policy requires each agreement to describe the services to be provided to the individuals, contain written assurances as signed by the local public agency that it will make available to the agency the non-federal share of funds, contain written assurance that agency approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect, and contain written assurance that the agreement will comply with all state plan requirements for services approved under the waiver, including the state's order of selection requirements.

1. School District Agreements

These joint rehabilitation and school district programs provide coordinated vocational rehabilitation and special education services to eligible youth with disabilities, especially significantly disabled youth, within the intermediate school district (ISD) or with local school districts. Emphasis is placed on students in need of transition service planning. The agreements provide for the

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full array of rehabilitation services, as needed. Referrals are from local high schools or ISDs.

The following school agreements are in effect during FY 2005:

<u>Intermediate/Local School District</u>	<u>MRS District</u>
Ann Arbor Public Schools	Ann Arbor
Hillsdale Co. ISD	Ann Arbor
Jackson Co. ISD	Ann Arbor
Jackson Pub. Schools. Spec. Ed.	Ann Arbor
LESA	Ann Arbor
Lenawee ISD-Youth Placement/GWI	Ann Arbor
Lenawee Co. ISD	Ann Arbor
Livingston County Schools Project	Ann Arbor
Washtenaw ISD-MAP	Ann Arbor
Washtenaw ISD (3)	Ann Arbor
Wayne Co. RESA-Detroit Public Schools	Detroit East
Maxey Boys Training School	Detroit West
Genesee ISD	Eastern MI
Huron ISD	Eastern MI
Lapeer County ISD	Eastern MI
Sanilac ISD	Eastern MI
St. Clair ISD (2)	Eastern MI
Tuscola ISD	Eastern MI
Kent ISD - ASSETS	Grand Rapids
Kent ISD - Lions-Deaf/HH	Grand Rapids
Kent ISD - Transitions	Grand Rapids
Ionia County ISD	Grand Rapids
Clinton Co. RESA	Lansing
Eaton ISD	Lansing
Ingham ISD (including Lansing School District)	Lansing
Shiawassee RESD	Lansing
Anchor Bay Schools	Macomb
Armada Schools	Macomb
Center Line Public Schools	Macomb
Center Line Schools (Chamber)	Macomb
Chippewa Valley Schools	Macomb
Clintondale Schools	Macomb
Fitzgerald Public Schools	Macomb
Fraser Public Schools	Macomb
L'Anse Creuse Public Schools	Macomb
Lincoln High School	Macomb
Macomb Academy	Macomb
MISD/Deaf Programming	Macomb
MISD/Lutz (2)	Macomb
MISD/Neil Reid School	Macomb

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MISD-Warren Woods-POHI	Macomb
New Haven High School	Macomb
Richmond High Schools	Macomb
Romeo Community Schools	Macomb
South Lake Schools	Macomb
Southwest Macomb Tech Ed. Con	Macomb
Utica Schools	Macomb
Warren Consolidated Schools	Macomb
Delta Schoolcraft ISD	Marquette
Dickinson-Iron ISD	Marquette
Eastern UP ISD	Marquette
Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	Marquette
Marquette-Alger ISD	Marquette
Bay-Arenac ISD	Mid-Michigan
Clare-Gladwin RESD	Mid-Michigan
Midland Co. ESA	Mid-Michigan
Saginaw ISD	Mid-Michigan
Charlevoix-Emmet ISD	Northern MI
Cheboygan Area Schools	Northern MI
C.O.O.R. ISD (2)	Northern MI
ESD-AMA	Northern MI
ESD-COP	Northern MI
Gaylord Comm. Schools	Northern MI
RESA Iosco (2)	Northern MI
Traverse Bay Area ISD (2)	Northern MI
Wexford-Missaukee ISD	Northern MI
Bloomfield Hills Public Schools	Oakland
Oakland Schools (2)	Oakland
Rochester Comm. Schools	Oakland
Royal Oak Public Schools	Oakland
W. Bloomfield Schools	Oakland
Berrien Co. ISD	Southwest MI
Branch ISD	Southwest MI
Calhoun ISD	Southwest MI
Kalamazoo RESA	Southwest MI
Lewis Cass ISD	Southwest MI
St. Joseph Co. ISD	Southwest MI
Van Buren ISD	Southwest MI
Dearborn Public Schools	Wayne
Monroe Co. ISD	Wayne
West Wayne Skills Center/Livonia Schools	Wayne
Wayne Co. RESA	Wayne
Wyandotte Public Schools/J.B. Skills Ctr.	Wayne
Allegan ISD	West Central
Baldwin Community Schools	West Central
Greenville Public Schools	West Central
Mason/Lake ISD	West Central

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Montcalm ISD	West Central
Muskegon Area ISD	West Central
Oceana ISD	West Central
Orchard View Schools	West Central
Ottawa Co. ISD	West Central
Wexford-Missaukee ISD	West Central

2. The University of Michigan Office Space and Services of
Office, Staff Benefits - Ann Arbor

This joint program provides services to University of Michigan employees with disabilities to enable these workers to return to suitable, productive employment as promptly as possible.

3. Community Mental Health Agreements

These joint rehabilitation and mental health programs operate under an umbrella agreement with separate local contracts. The umbrella agreement is between the Michigan Rehabilitation Services and Community Health. The purpose of the umbrella agreement is to permit MRS district offices and local community mental health centers to (a) provide for the continuance of cooperative programs; (b) expand current program activities; and/or (c) respond to rehabilitation needs of mentally ill and developmentally disabled people in communities where integrative programs are limited or do not exist.

The individual local contracts are formal agreements for funds and services between MRS district offices and community mental health (CMH) boards or centers. Clients must be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

The CMH boards provide state and local matching funds, liaison, diagnostic and clinical information, and therapy. MRS assigns needed staff and provides the full range of rehabilitation services according to client needs.

The following CMH agreements are in effect:

<u>Community Mental Health Agency</u>	<u>MRS District</u>
Jackson Lifeways	Ann Arbor
Lenawee CMH	Ann Arbor
Lenawee Co. CMH Ser. Bd.	Ann Arbor
Livingston County. CMH	Ann Arbor
Livingston CMH - Genesis	Ann Arbor
Wash. Co. CMH	Ann Arbor

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Wayne County CMH	Detroit East
Huron Behavioral Health Services	Eastern MI
Lapeer Community Mental Health	Eastern MI
Sanilac County CMH	Eastern MI
St. Clair Co. CMH (3)	Eastern MI
Tuscola County CMH	Eastern MI
Kent Co. CMH (2)	Grand Rapids
Kent County CMH/Pathfinders	Grand Rapids
Ionia County CMH	Grand Rapids
Clinton-Eaton-Ingham CMH (2)	Lansing
Community Mental Health	Macomb
Copper Country CMH	Marquette
Gogebic County CMH	Marquette
Hiawatha Beh. Health	Marquette
Northpointe Beh. Healthcare	Marquette
Pathways	Marquette
Bay-Arenac CMH Services Board	Mid-Michigan
Central Michigan CMH	Mid-Michigan
Saginaw Co. CMH Auth.	Mid-Michigan
Oakland Co. CMH Services	Oakland
Au Sable Valley CMH	Northern MI
Manistee/Benzie CMH Services	Northern MI
North Country CMH	Northern MI
Northeast Michigan CMH	Northern MI
Northern Lakes CMH	Northern MI
Branch Co. CMH	Southwest MI
Calhoun CMH/Summit Pointe	Southwest MI
CMH of Barry Co.	Southwest MI
Kalamazoo CMH	Southwest MI
Riverwood CMH	Southwest MI
Van Buren Co. CMH	Southwest MI
Woodland Beh. Healthcare Ctr.	Southwest MI
Monroe CMH Authority	Wayne
Allegan Co. CMH	West Central
Montcalm Ctr. for Behav. Health	West Central
Ottawa Co. CMH	West Central

4. Tri-Party Agreements

These agreements represent collaborative programming between MRS, CMH, and ISDs. The purpose of these types of agreements is to promote efficient coordination of comprehensive services necessary for youth with developmental and mental/emotional disabilities to achieve vocational/career preparation while in high school and more efficiently transition into suitable employment following

education. The collaboration of these three entities promotes more cost-effective use of limited funds to serve more individuals from a targeted population (school youth). Referrals are made from either local CMH or ISD.

The following tri-party cooperative agreements are in effect:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>MRS District</u>
St. Clair Co. CMH/ISD	Eastern
Copper Country ISD/CMH	Marquette
Northpointe Beh. Healthcare (Men ISD/CMH)	Marquette
Gratiot-Isabella RESD and CMH	Mid-Michigan
Manistee ISD/CMH	Northern
Mecosta ISD/CHM	West Central
Muskegon Area ISD & CMH	West Central
Newaygo Co. CMH & ISD	West Central

5. Other Agreements

Rehabilitation programs have been jointly developed with county departments of the Family Independence Agency (FIA) and other agencies to expand the delivery of rehabilitation services to special populations who meet MRS eligibility requirements, such as adjudicated youth, American Indians, welfare recipients, etc.

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The following cooperative agreements are in effect:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>MRS District</u>
Hillsdale Co. FIA	Ann Arbor
Lenawee Co. FIA	Ann Arbor
Washtenaw-Livingston CSA	Ann Arbor
Blue Water. Wayne County CIL	Detroit West
Covenant	Detroit West
Detroit Rescue Mission	Detroit West
Sickle Cell Disease of America	Detroit West
Wings of Faith	Detroit West
Wings of Faith/FIA	Detroit West
United Cerebral Palsy	Detroit West
MI. Works! Career Alliance	Eastern MI
MI. Works! Career Alliance (mentoring)	Eastern MI
St. Clair Co. FIA	Eastern MI
FIA/Sojourners - TBI	Grand Rapids
Kent County - Corrections/GWI	Grand Rapids
Kent County - Exodus Ministries/Hope	Grand Rapids
Kent County - Health Dept. Mary Free Bed	Grand Rapids
Kent County/Hope Network - Hispanic Out.	Grand Rapids
Ingham Co. FIA	Lansing
Mid-South Sub. Abuse Com.	Lansing
Macomb Community College	Macomb
Hannahville Indian Comm.	Marquette
Dickinson County Commission (TRICO)	Marquette
Northern Michigan SAS	Mid-Michigan
Little River Band of Odawa Indians	Northern MI
NMB FIA (Crawford County. FIA)	Northern MI
Northern MI SAS, Inc.	Northern MI
NWMCOG-HPRP	Northern MI
Oakland Community College (2)	Oakland
Berrien Co. FIA	Southwest MI
Calhoun Area Tech Center	Southwest MI
Kalamazoo FIA.Goodwill	Southwest MI
Kalamazoo CASS	Southwest MI
Lake Michigan College	Southwest MI
Mid-South Sub. Abuse	Southwest MI
Kalamazoo FIA - Surgery	Southwest MI
Schoolcraft College (2)	Wayne
SEMCA	Wayne
Montcalm Community College	West Central
Muskegon Community College	West Central

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Multi-District Agreements

GAM	Mid-Michigan, West Central Grand Rapids
CMU	Detroit West Oakland Southwest West Central

Statewide Agreements

Goodwill of Greater Detroit (HIV/AIDS)	Detroit Eastern
School for the Deaf	Eastern MI
Goodwill Ind. of Greater Detroit	Macomb
Farm Rehabilitation-Easter Seals	Mid-Michigan
MACIL	CDD

MRS will seek cash match agreements in fiscal year 2006 to augment funds and to develop specific targeted agreements with local agencies.

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Attachment 4.9(c): Interagency Cooperation with Other Agencies
and Entities.

(1) Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide
Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities

The agency cooperates with other federal, state, and local public agencies, which are not a part of the statewide workforce investment system, to provide comprehensive services related to the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities.

The agency has a long established practice to develop and refine interagency agreements with a variety of federal, state, and local agencies and programs. These include the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) to develop a coordinated agreement for utilization of Medicaid; Department of Human Resources (DHS) to promote collaborative services for adjudicated youth and TANF recipients, as well as to promote education of employers in hiring persons with disabilities; an interdepartmental workgroup from Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Department of Human Services, and Michigan Department of Community Health to work on implementation plans for integrating the components of the Ticket To Work/Work Incentives Improvement Act (TTWWIIA); to continue the efforts initiated through the Department of Labor (DOL) grant funds to insure inclusion of people with disabilities in all workforce programs. Work continues with regional and local district offices of the Social Security Administration (SSA) to establish and improve the relationship for implementing features of the TTWWIIA. In 2002, MRS entered into a formal agreement with SSA to act as an Employment Network under the Ticket-to-Work program. In addition, MRS has six agreements with employment networks and will continue to explore other opportunities to collaborate in the delivery of employment and vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who have a "Ticket-to-Work" from SSA. These agreements will allow the agency to establish cooperative relationships for full utilization of services and facilities not carried out through the statewide workforce investment system. The state agency will continue interagency cooperation with, and utilization of, the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Under-Secretary for Rural Development of the United

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States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs to the extent that such agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system. These agreements will promote informed choice and enhanced employment outcomes for persons in rural areas and/or persons who wish to pursue agrarian employment outcomes throughout the state of Michigan.

The agency reviews interagency agreements to ensure they are meeting objectives, goals, and priorities per review schedule. Agency workgroups, consisting of field personnel, administrative staff from the agency, community partners, other state agencies, and Michigan Rehabilitation Council (MRC) members, develop agreements that make full utilization of federal, state, and local resources.

The statewide interagency agreement with MDCH will focus on: (a) the promotion of complete and timely access to Medicaid coverage for persons with disabilities; (b) collaborative practices with Medicaid managed care; (c) expanded understanding of the Medicaid process to agency staff to assure their ability to work with physicians and health maintenance organization representatives, which is especially important with passage of Medicaid buy-in provisions; (d) fiscal responsibilities; and (e) reimbursement policies.

One interagency agreement with DHS targets youth at risk within the adjudicated youth program sponsored by DHS. The agreement provides outreach and targets underserved minority youth populations. A previous interagency agreement with DHS that utilized the governor-appointed Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC) to network with and educate employers on ADA and the benefits of hiring workers with disabilities, has been transferred to the new Department of Labor and Economic Growth. MCDC also links with other networks of consumer groups to provide support in the local communities for the MRS priorities.

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth is collaborating and partnering with the Michigan Department of Community Health, the Michigan Department of Human Services, and the Michigan Department of Corrections to develop an integrated approach to prisoner reentry. Under the leadership of the Governor's administration, the group is developing an interdisciplinary system to improve parole success rates and thereby reduce crime. Michigan

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Rehabilitation Services' involvement centers around improving the pathway to vocational rehabilitation through role clarification, information sharing and improved collaborative transition planning for persons with disabilities returning from correction facilities to their respective communities.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services is developing a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the principles, terms and conditions under which the United States Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration, Apprenticeship Training, Employer & Labor Services and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth-Rehabilitation Services will collaborate to develop, promote and coordinate strategies to increase career opportunities for persons with disabilities in the skilled trades.

Two additional interagency agreements with Michigan State University are: 1) A three-year agreement with Michigan State University called Project Excellence to link the university's research and evaluation capabilities with the agency's needs for continuous improvement measures. 2) The establishment of student internships that support CSPD recruiting efforts from the state universities that have CORE-approved master's degree programs in vocational rehabilitation counseling. 3) The cooperative development and implementation of an on-line learning and knowledge base system (E-Learn) to provide for staff training and development.

The agency has in place Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with all Workforce Investment Boards (WIB). These agreements focus on providing inclusive employment related services for persons with disabilities including training and support services.

Key items included in all interagency agreements encompass the provision of inter-component training and technical assistance on the role, function and requirements of the vocational rehabilitation program, to promote the equal, effective and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities; the designation of lead agency; the use of information and financial management systems that link all components of the statewide workforce investment system; use of customer service features, such as common intake and referral procedures, customer databases, resource information, and

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human services hotlines; establishment of relationships with employers to support the employment of individuals with disabilities, particularly, individuals with the most significant disabilities; identification of staff roles, responsibilities and available resources together with the specification of financial responsibility of each component of the statewide workforce investment system for paying for services; and specification of dispute resolution procedures.

The agency has an agreement with the Office of the Post-Secondary Services of Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth that addresses roles and responsibilities, including financial, in support of the participation of eligible students with disabilities in post-secondary education. The interagency agreement provides guidance and sets a template for the development of individual agreements with community colleges and other institutions of higher education (IHE) in Michigan that may contain specific provisions for the payment of auxiliary aids and services and other comparable benefits required for a student to participate in post-secondary education. The agency currently has seven agreements with five IHEs and plans to enter into additional agreements with the remainder of the twenty-eight community colleges and fifteen public universities in Michigan. The agency also plans to update an agreement with the Michigan Student Financial Aid Association.

(2) Coordination with Education Officials.

The state vocational rehabilitation agency will continue to coordinate services and activities with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services. At the secondary level, it also coordinates the development and approval of an individual plan for employment (IPE) at the earliest possible time during the transition planning process that VR services are appropriate.

In 1999, an interagency agreement was signed with the lead agency, the Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, to support the seamless transition of students from school to adult life that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized educational program (IEP) under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act. This

agreement was interpreted through publishing and disseminating a booklet entitled, "Transition Services for Youth, Answers to Frequently Asked Questions".

The agreement addresses key items identified in the Act, including:

1. Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in transition planning, particularly vocational rehabilitation services.

The Department of Education is engaging in a continuous improvement process designed to obtain input from stakeholders in the targeted area of transition and has sought participation and input from the state vocational rehabilitation agency. The state unit staff provides technical assistance and consultation and participates as a member of the educational agency Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Steering Committee. The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) consisting of 30 governor appointed representatives including the State unit as an ex-officio member is emphasizing transition and will make recommendations to the Michigan State Board of Education. This year, the Special Education Advisory Committee has identified transition as an action priority and is working collaboratively with the existing Transition Network Team, a state level body co-chaired by the state unit and the educational agency.

2. Transition planning between the educational entity and the state unit that facilitates the development and completion of individualized education programs.

The vocational rehabilitation agency staff does not complete the individualized educational program (IEP); the educational entity staff completes the individualized educational program. Partnership agreements currently in place address the participation of state agency staff in the IEP process; rehabilitation counselors are often invited to participate in individual IEPs to share vocational expertise and/or work with the student.

The state unit collects data and maintains a directory of agency counselors specializing in transition caseloads including staff who maintain partial transition caseloads. Linkages between district offices and local schools are both formals as evidenced through written partnership agreements and informal as evidenced by

significant communication and collaboration in the absence of a written partnership agreement.

3. Roles and responsibilities of lead agencies including the identification of lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition.

The provision of training and technical assistance on the role function and requirements of the vocational rehabilitation program and coordination of transition services with the schools is ongoing. MRS has determined the criteria for qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors; the lead agency, the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services has developed qualifications and standards for transition coordinators and is obtaining public comment prior to implementation of the newly devised qualifications.

The State agency and the educational agency will provide training statewide to educate and promote the mandate for transition services, and provide joint training of counselors and coordinators, emphasizing the collaborative requirements of the process and including key stakeholders as trainers and audience. This will promote the equal, effective and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities. During this next year, training will be conducted at independent statewide conferences and at agency sponsored workshops designed to meet the training needs of rehabilitation counselors.

The Department of Education, in cooperation with the vocational rehabilitation agency, ended a discretionary grant program called the Transition Services Project on September 30, 2003. This project provided technical assistance and capacity building to transition coordinators. These transition coordinators work closely with vocational rehabilitation agency counselors and other education personnel to ensure the completion of the IEP. The new discretionary project, entitled TOPS, Transition Outcomes Project, continues formula funding to Michigan's 57 Intermediate School Districts (ISD). It also initiated an accountability phase that requires a review of a statistically significant sample of IEPs from each of the ISDs and a compilation of results for continued planning. This process has required the involvement of Directors of Special Education and

transition coordinators in capacity building at the community level.

The sharing of information and use of financial management systems that link all components of the statewide workforce investment system is ongoing.

Partnerships at the state level between the educational entity and the state unit have resulted in a sharing of many of the costs of transition, however, there are generally agreed upon cost sharing procedures. Agreements between entities at the local level address the use of financial resources and specify data sharing activities. The state vocational rehabilitation agency funds activities required for the eligible student's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), such as job placement and job coaching. The educational entity funds services required as a part of Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) and the IEP, such as community-based instruction, work-based learning, transition coordination, leisure skills training, adult living skills training, social skills training, self-determination skills training, and family education.

The agreement is designed to act as a template or model for the subsequent development of local partnership agreements that address school to work activities and the Michigan Career Preparation system.

Both the schools and the state vocational rehabilitation agency have established strong relationships with employers to support the employment of individuals with disabilities as evidenced by supported employment outcomes and rehabilitation employment outcomes. The Career Preparation system is linking not only the schools, the state vocational rehabilitation agency and the workforce investment agencies, but is intended to routinely include employers in the planning and implementation arena.

The state unit is engaged in creating resources and capacity to support the identification of post-secondary training when appropriate in support of the Governor's emphasis on increasing and keeping college graduates in Michigan.

4. Identification of and outreach to students include the assignment of rehabilitation staff to schools, education systems, and intermediate school districts to act as liaison and outreach agents. Transition coordinators in the schools designed by the education agency work cooperatively with designated rehabilitation staff to identify students who qualify for services. Identification of and outreach to students includes a description of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and the scope of services available to eligible students. It also monitors and assures that district office plans address services to students eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and eligible incarcerated youth.

All MRS district business plans include a description of identification and outreach strategies, community development plans, and capacity building. The agreement monitors and assures that district office plans address outreach to youth and students with disabilities from underserved populations such as minorities and at risk populations. Data and management reports are provided to support the development of business plans that result in improved outcomes for all youth, with emphasis on improved outcomes for minority and at risk youth.

State unit staff routinely participate in outreach activities through the creation and dissemination of marketing brochures and booklets as well as regular presentations, exhibits, poster sessions and presence at education and other related conferences.

The Michigan Rehabilitation Services has entered into an interagency agreement with the Bureau of Juvenile Justice, Family Independence Agency to better meet the needs of adjudicated youth in that system. Six advanced interagency trainings to establish more effective communication and referral mechanisms are being held.

The Michigan Rehabilitation Services has accepted grant funding from Federal Department of Labor to collaboratively develop MI Connections, a high school-high tech program for Michigan students with disabilities. During this second grant year, the program will be expanded beyond Kent County to other Michigan communities.

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The state vocational rehabilitation agency entered into an informal agreement with Adult Education to provide guidance and technical assistance on learning disabilities as support to adult educators. An interagency team has convened as a preliminary effort to develop state policy and screening recommendations on learning disabilities for use with learners in alternative education settings.

(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers.

In establishing cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational services providers, the State Unit, consistent with 34 CFR 361.51 requires accessibility of facilities, personnel standards, and the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse. The State Unit is working to develop standards for providers of service, provider information to promote consumer informed choice, and outcome and performance measures.

The agency has established relationships with private non-profit organizations that are community rehabilitation providers, medical service providers, and providers of other services and supports that are required by customers to achieve the goals in their Individualized Plans for Employment. These services include medical and psychological assessments and services, job development and employer services, job coaching and facilitation, accommodations and ergonomics, independent living services to support employment goals, follow up services, and other services especially for individuals with significant disabilities. The agreements vary from information and referral relationships; cash match agreements, fee for service relationships, to grant relationships. Quality, cost, and effectiveness are reviewed annually. Customer satisfaction with the services is obtained prior to payment. Vendors and community partners are informed of the agency strategic goals and are involved in, or provide input into, district work plans and community resource development. District staff develop relationships in the community to meet the needs of their customers and to provide choice of providers to their customers. Activities include developing relationships and agreements with employment networks to implement the Ticket to Work program. At the state level, the agency director has a positive working relationship with the MARO Employment and

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Training Association to develop standards consistent with the Rehabilitation Act.

The state's independent living/centers for independent living (IL/CIL) program promotes program collaboration and cooperative agreements, at both the state and local levels. The IL/CIL program is established by the Michigan State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) in accord with public policy commitments of the federal Rehabilitation Act. As established by the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and other SPIL partners, the Michigan IL/CIL program emphasizes the development and expansion of a variety of partnerships and cooperative agreements, which are specified in the SPIL.

The IL/CIL program is responsible for the development and support of a statewide network of consumer-run centers for independent living (CIL) and community IL supports that help people with disabilities exercise self-determination and participate fully in their communities. Formal partnership agreements at both state and local levels specify annual objectives and collaborative working arrangements between the CILs and local MRS offices. As addressed in these agreements, one role of the statewide IL/CIL network is to function as an essential part of the state's comprehensive workforce development and rehabilitation system, serving to facilitate the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and other workforce development services and to promote consumer success in obtaining, maintaining, and advancing in employment.

As the responsible administering agency for the IL/CIL program, MRS provided an FY 2003 total of \$5.1 million in grants -- \$2.3 million of which was Title I VR funding for vocationally related services to MRS customers and \$.5 million of which was state funding for reimbursement of vocationally-related personal assistance services. The IL/CIL grants went to 17 private, non-profit organizations, which included eleven full-functioning CILs, four communities with developing CILs or CIL planning initiatives, and two statewide organizations (the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the Michigan Association of Centers for Independent Living (MACIL)). Overall, the network provided a total of more than 70,000 hours of community services and had more than 28,000 individuals participate in CIL services during FY 2004.

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At the state level, the SPIL reflects cooperative agreement among the three SPIL Partners, which include the SILC, the Michigan Commission for the Blind, and MRS. The SPIL is also developed in collaboration with community partners, including the non-profit organizations of MACIL and the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC). The MRS grant agreements with SILC and MACIL specify cooperative agreements for implementation of the SPIL as well as development and support of the CIL network during the year. Each CIL has a comprehensive grant agreement with MRS that specifies the array of its commitments to meet federal CIL standards and carry out the full range of its responsibilities under the SPIL. One part of each grant is a local level collaborative agreement detailing the cooperative arrangements between the CIL and local MRS office for the direct delivery of services to MRS customers in support of vocational goals. Each local agreement addresses needs and services determined most appropriate for the community, reflecting both MRS priorities (such as services to youth with disabilities) and the ongoing MRS/CIL collaboration. Service areas most often included in these local agreements are prevocational empowerment services to help MRS consumers prepare for employment, long-term support services to help MRS consumers maintain and advance in employment, and transitional services to help students prepare for the move from school to adult life and employment in the community. Many of the agreements also address the development of community partnerships to facilitate vocational outcomes and outreach to minority, unserved, and underserved populations.

Details of the statewide IL/CIL program, including its cooperative agreements, are provided in the SPIL and in the related annual Section 704 Performance Report.

(4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

The state vocational rehabilitation agency has maintained a long-standing agreement with the Department of Community Health for the provision of extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. This agreement has been operationalized at local levels through the creation of specific partnership agreements between Community Mental Health, Vocational Rehabilitation and typically a community rehabilitation organization.

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In 1998, the Department of Community Health and the State Unit jointly issued a set of guidelines for the provision of supported employment services. The policies and collaboration were reconfirmed in FY 2000 to staff and providers. This document was jointly developed and distributed to assist communities in the development and expansion of supported employment services. The State Unit engages in a monthly meeting with mental health officials to support continued collaboration for the provision of supported employment services and other mutual services required for successful employment and independent living outcomes.

With the move by the Department of Community Health to managed care contracts with local community mental health boards, there has been substantial change in the funding structure and eligibility criteria for mental health consumers. Agreements between Community Mental Health and local field offices of Michigan Rehabilitation Services have had to adapt to these changing circumstances, which have had the effect of shifting some of the costs for supported employment from local mental health entities to the agency. The agency plans to address these shifts by engaging local mental health entities in dialogue to stem the potential loss of extended support services for significantly disabled consumers.

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Attachment 4.11(b): Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Regulation:

The designated State agency has implemented a comprehensive system of personnel development that meets the requirements of section 101 (a)(7) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.18

Compliance Strategy:

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth-Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is in the fifth year of implementing a five-year plan to demonstrate compliance with the comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) regulations. The objective of this plan is to assure that persons with disabilities are receiving needed services by staff that are qualified in their respective fields. The following definitions clarify the state standard of qualified rehabilitation counselor, qualified vocational technical teacher, qualified rehabilitation assistant, and qualified interpreter. These definitions are based on standards, which are consistent with the highest requirements in the state:

- A qualified rehabilitation counselor is defined as counselor with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or guidance and counseling or related counseling field which required a supervised internship or has attained the educational standards established by Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification for a certified rehabilitation counselor (CRC).

Having a master's degree in an unrelated field is no longer sufficient for entry-level employment as a rehabilitation counselor. An unrelated master's degree is defined as a special education degree, social work degree, etc. Currently employed counselors with master's degrees in unrelated fields must complete all course work they are lacking which demonstrates they have attained the educational requirement consistent with the Certified Rehabilitation Counseling (CRC) standards by year 2005 or by 2010 if they are person with a disability that affects their life span or physical stamina.

If any case carrying staff do not attain such educational standards by their designated compliance date they will relinquish their title of "counselor" and be reassigned duties consistent with their educational level, skills and abilities. Therefore, a counselor who does not attain the

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educational standards will not be permitted to determine eligibility or be involved in plan development and approval, approval of plan amendments, rehabilitated closures unless assisted by a qualified rehabilitation counselor.

- a vocational technical teacher or instructor employed by the state agency must demonstrate that they are qualified in their respective field by having the appropriate educational degree or work experience, teaching methodology course work or seminar as required by the state technical school's accrediting agencies. Also, such teacher must attend, at least, every five years an in-service training program on disability sensitivity, informed choice and acquisition of needed reasonable accommodations or modifications.
- a qualified rehabilitation assistant is a staff who annually attends all training programs, which they and their respective supervisor have deemed necessary.
- the State standard for a qualified interpreter is one who is certified by the Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), possesses a Level III or Interpreters Certification and/or Transliteration Certificate and is an interpreter of the customer's choosing.

The MRS CSPD plan has four implementation phases for attaining and maintaining a qualified work force who meet the standards that are based on the highest requirements in the State. A fourth phase was added fiscal year 2002 and addressed the addition of the 2010 compliance date for six staff with disabilities that impact on their physical stamina and/or life expectancy.

Funds have been committed to provide needed training for current staff from the state's in-service training grant and a long-term CSPD training grant from RSA. The MRS Plan assures that personnel will complete training and have access to developmental interventions needed to meet the standards in a timely manner. The CSPD plan phases and their outcomes are outlined as follows:

Phase One FY99-FY00: The Diagnostic Phase

1-educate the workforce to the qualified standards and agency commitment to assisting them with attaining such standards;

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2-determine the gap between each employee's current educational levels and the previously mentioned qualified standard by conducting a survey of all current case carrying personnel. Collection of this data and analysis of these survey results will determine who needs additional academic training, which assures that they have attained the educational standards consistent with the certified Rehabilitation Counseling (CRC) standards;
3-educate staff to the funds available to assist staff in pursuing needed academic course work: and
4-develop a database for tracking each employee's educational levels and progress toward attaining the status of being "qualified" in their respective fields.

Phase Two FY00-FY04: The Implementation Phase

1-maintain established database;
2-track staff's progress toward attainment of qualified standards;
3-educate personnel involved in hiring on how to assure that qualified applicant pools are being utilized;
4-assist higher education institutions with RSA funding in Michigan with recruitment and retention efforts.

Phase Three FY 04-05: The Evaluation Phase

1-assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the CSPD; and
2-update data on projected workforce needs for the next five years.

Phase Four FY05-FY10: The Compliance Phase Of Six Staff with Disabilities

1-provide ongoing support to the six staff with disabilities that have a compliance date of 2010
2-seek additional funding sources to maintain educational opportunities for all personnel;
3-educate staff to the CSPD direction for the next five years; and
4-reassign any counselors who did not attain the required educational standards and limit their scope of practice.

Section 4.11(b)(1:i-iii)

Regulation:

Collection and analysis on an annual basis of data on qualified personnel need and personnel development consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.18(a).

Compliance Strategies:

The following four tables indicate that the data needed for compliance to Section 4.11(b) (1:i-iii) has been updated for this fiscal year. The four tables will present data as follows:

- Table One demonstrates that data is being collected to document the number of personnel who provide vocational rehabilitation services broken down by personnel category (361.18(a)(1:i-ii)).
- Table Two demonstrates the number of personnel who will be needed by the State agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in five years based on projections of the number to be served including the numbers of personnel expected to retire or leave the field (361.18(a)(1:iii)).
- Table Three demonstrates that data is being collected to document the adequacy of a qualified applicant pool of graduates from the post-secondary institutions in Michigan with RSA funding (361.18(a)(2:i-iii)).
- Table Four documents the current number of agency's counselors that have the certified rehabilitation counseling certificate, master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, master's degree in related field, and which counselors will need to pursue additional course work to attain the state standard of qualified rehabilitation counselor.

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Table One
361.18(a)(1:i)

Personnel Category	Number of State Employees
*Rehabilitation Coordinators	7
Rehabilitation Counselors (masters degree)	240
Rehabilitation Educators (voc. technical center teachers)	22
Site managers who may carry a caseload (masters degree)	32

* Rehabilitation Coordinators are bachelor-leveled counselors who are targeted in the development plan to attain their master's degrees. If you combine the counselors, coordinators and site managers, then we have 279 potential case carrying staff.

DATA SOURCE: MAIN Data Base-Payroll #3 Category, ending 2004.

The following table illustrates the number of anticipated retirees and number of anticipated customers at the beginning of FY 06. The annual turnover rate of counselors remains constant at 10% and those positions continue to be filled within three to six months of a counselor's departure. The ratio of current customers, rehabilitated or not, is 1:161. It is anticipated that no new FTE counselors would be approved by the beginning of FY 06 if a) MRS maintains the current staff ratio of 1 counselor to 161 customers, b) if there is no reduction in force initiative c) if the projected growth in customers served has been projected correctly at 3% gain annually, d) MRS continues to successfully handle the 4645 Tickets-to-Work assigned to the agency, and e) if the agency maintains an FTE count of 240 counselors by filling immediately all vacated positions.

Table Two
361.18(a)(1:iii)

Number of projected individuals with disabilities that will be served in 2006-07 (based on an annual increase of 3%)	Number of anticipated retirees by year 2006-07
45122	* 2

*Three factors are influencing the calculation of anticipated retirees by MRS in 2006. First, MRS senior managers are currently developing a succession plan as we want to be sure we are not only prepared for counselor staffing issues but also have a sound plan for replacing management and administrative staff. However, the current enrollment and graduation rates at the three CORE accredited master's rehabilitation counseling programs in the state is expected to continue to provide an adequate pool of qualified applicants for counselor positions. Third, all counselor positions that were vacated due to the early retirement in 2002 have been filled. Adequate applicant pools of qualified candidates continue to be developed for open positions. Also, all districts and site manager positions that also were vacated due to the early retirement in 2002 have also been filled with qualified candidates.

The following table documents the current enrollment and graduation rates at the three CORE accredited rehabilitation counseling programs in Michigan in FY 2004.

Table Three
361.18(a)(2)(i-iii)

CORE accredited Higher Education Institutions	Michigan State Data reported Fall 2004	Wayne State University Data Reported for 2003	Western Michigan University Data reported for Fall 2004
Current enrollment in rehabilitation counseling master's program	26	49	18
Number of minority students	7	29	10
Number of current students with disabilities	3	22	11

The following table indicates that 97 percent of the agency's current case-carrying staff are in compliance with state standard of qualified rehabilitation counselor.

Table Four
Current Level of Compliance

<u>Educational Standard</u>	Number of case carrying staff N=263
Have already attained the educational standard of a qualified rehab. counselor by having a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Guidance and Counseling, Related Counseling Field and/or are CRC certified.	274 of 279 = 97% compliance rate
Will attain their needed educational standards by the approved compliance date of September 2005 and have shown annual substantial progress toward attainment	4
Potential retirees expecting to retire before September 30, 2005 and/or staff scheduled to attain their needed educational standards by September 2010 due to receiving a reasonable accommodation for a time extension under the ADA	8 (6 of the 8 have been granted an ADA extension to get in compliance by 2010 in case they don't retire as expected)

DATA SOURCE: FY 2004 CSPD Databank

Site managers occasionally inherit a caseload when a counselor may be placed on emergency medical leave. Thirty-one of the thirty-two (one vacancy in the process of being filled) site managers have the necessary educational degrees needed to be a qualified rehabilitation counselor in the state of Michigan. In the geographic area where the one site manager has an unrelated master's degree, we have a district manager whose educational degrees are in compliance with the state standard for a qualified rehabilitation counselor and, therefore, would provide emergency caseload coverage.

DATA SOURCE: FY 2004 CSPD Databank

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Compliance Strategy:

To assure that all case carrying staff attain the standard of a qualified rehabilitation counselor by the target dates of September 30, 2005 or 2010 if they are staff member with a severe disability, the following prioritization process will be implemented. This process reflects four values, which indicate which case carrying staff will receive access to the CSPD, grant funds and other tuition reimbursement funds first. These values are:

- 1) that the case carrying staff with the greatest educational deficits will be prioritized first,
- 2) case carrying staff with the greatest years of employment remaining to the state agency will also be prioritized,
- 3) counselors with disabilities which impact on life span or physical stamina (n=6) will have a compliance date of September 30, 2010 if approved through the agency's ADA reasonable accommodation process.
- 4) Case carrying staff with the least amount of employment years (potential retirees before 2005) remaining with MRS were prioritized last.

Section 4.11(b)(2)

Regulation: Plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified rehabilitation personnel including the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional association to recruit, prepare, and retain qualified personnel, including personnel from minority backgrounds, and personnel who are individuals with disabilities (34 CFR 361.18);
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Compliance Strategies:

MRS has a longstanding commitment to recruiting, preparing and retaining staff that are representative of minority cultures and persons with disabilities. The general population of Michigan has a minority population of 17%. (DATA SOURCE: 2000 US Census Information) MRS has established a strategic goal that the agency will, at minimum; maintain that at least twenty percent of the state agency workforce is representative of persons from minority backgrounds and/or individuals with disabilities. In FY

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2003, 25% of the current agency workforce is a minority with 12% being persons with disabilities. To assure that such percentages are maintained, the following retention and recruitment activities will occur annually:

RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

- Assess and monitor the enrollment at the higher education institution within the state with an emphasis on the RSA funded master's programs.
- Facilitate the visibility of the State unit at the institutions of higher education by:
 - a) Allowing MRS personnel to serve on university's curriculum committees and as adjunct faculty and guest lecturers;
 - b) Continue to be the most utilized placement and intern sites by the institutions of higher education; all employment opportunities with MRS are posted on the Internet. The MRS web page lists all available positions as well as the process for applying. The Michigan Civil Service Web page, which lists all state government job postings, allows quick linking to the agency's job postings. Also, all MRS counselor positions are posted on the Rehabilitation Recruitment Center at the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials web page, which provides for a national drawing of qualified applicants.
- Annually distribute employment brochures to the student attendees at the National Conference of Rehabilitation Educators, CSAVR, RSA, and the Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns Division of the National Rehabilitation Association.
- Distributed a staff recruitment video to all CORE accredited master's program explaining the employment opportunities with MRS and the benefits of residing in Michigan. Also distributed the recruitment video and hiring brochures to 18 master's programs in Michigan, which offer a graduate degree in career and guidance counseling. This recruitment video prominently includes VR professionals with disabilities and professionals of minority backgrounds.

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- List all available job vacancies with the Rehabilitation Recruitment Center at the National Clearinghouse, and
- Encourage staff to assist customers interested with becoming a rehabilitation counselor by developing Individual Employment Plans reflective of such vocational goal.
- Maintain paid internship opportunities for students participating in master's graduate programs in rehabilitation counseling programs, and particularly students with disabilities and of minority backgrounds.
- As a major co-sponsor of the Michigan Youth Leadership Forum, encourage young leaders with disabilities and minority youth leaders with disabilities to attend college and consider a career in the human services, particularly fields that enhance the lives of people with disabilities.

RETENTION ACTIVITIES

- Encourage staff involvement in their respective professional and advocacy organizations, including those that advocate for disability and minority populations, nationally and at the state level so networking with other rehabilitation professionals is possible.
- Building a constructive work place culture that values inclusion, diversity and customer and employee satisfaction.
- Invest in staff growth and development by providing training opportunities through various teaching modalities such as on-line. In October 2001, MRS received the RSA Commissioners Award for it's on-line learning system.
- Offer all staff a series on management or leadership development activities as part of the succession planning efforts that encourages participation by staff with disabilities and with minority backgrounds.

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- Mentoring of new staff by a retired casework and staff development consultant will continue to be provided in FY 2006, including mentoring to staff with disabilities and of minority backgrounds.

LEADERSHIP and CAPACITY BUILDING

- MRS continues to provide leadership training through five (5) major endeavors. First, the School for Leadership is run annually. This School involves 25 diverse MRS staff members from all levels of employment who wish to further develop their leadership skills. The School participants not only attend leadership development training every other month for 12 months they also plan an agency-wide training program on leadership. Alumni activities continue to build leadership skills.
- The second endeavor to provide MRS staff with leadership development activities can be found through the MRS on-line learning system. On-line leadership courses and development activities are available to all staff that registers for such activities.
- The third leadership activity is the agency's cultural change effort. All agency sites offices are working on staff empowerment and self-actualization activities they have developed for their local staff. This is now coordinated with the Governor's and the department's cultural change activities.
- The fourth endeavor of leadership development is the series of training programs developed for newly promoted managers. The newly promoted managers meet once a quarter to work on various leadership skill development. For example, the next newly promoted managerial training will develop one's ability to move between strategic thinking and operational thinking.
- Finally, all managers are encouraged to participate in leadership training offered by MRS, our department in DLEG, and Civil Service, often in cooperation with Region V RCEP. During 2005-2006, managers will participate in a "360 degree" evaluation process that

will include leadership and coaching skill enhancements.

- MRS is also reviewing the materials and agendas provided by the RSA-funded National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute. The agency plans to nominate staff for these programs during FY 06. One MRS staff member currently serves on the advisory board for this RSA-funded leadership initiative.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

- During FY 03, MRS assigned one staff member to research innovative succession planning activities. A training series was developed to address succession issues with the kick-off program, which began in April 2004.
- During FY 2002, focus groups were held for those individuals who were not promoted to supervisory positions, which resulted from the early retirement program. These focus groups provided the agency management team with vital information regarding our current staff's ability to interview well for management positions and to be well prepared for such opportunities. This information has been incorporated in Emerging Manager training.
- Newly promoted managers join a cohort of staff who participate in a 12-month series of training programs to further develop their management skills.
- The MRS executive team has made a commitment to provide individualized coaching to interested staff who are interested in being prepared for future promotional opportunities. In addition, the executive team has been meeting with non-promoted managers to determine their staff development needs, so that a coaching and training schedule may be created.

Section 4.11(b)(3)

Regulation: Establishment and maintenance of personnel standards meeting the requirements of 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that personnel including professionals and paraprofessionals are adequately retrained and prepared including:

- (A) standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or recognized certification licensing registration or in the absence of these requirements. Other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and
- (B) to the extent that such standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline the steps the State is currently taking and the steps the State plans to take to retrain or hire personnel within the designated State unit so that such personnel meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state;

Compliance Strategy:

The State of Michigan does not have any established state personnel standards, which define a qualified rehabilitation counselor, vocational technical teacher or rehabilitation assistant. Therefore, MRS has defined these terms as listed as below. The State of Michigan does have a standard that clarifies what is a qualified interpreter and MRS utilizes this standard when hiring or contracting with interpreters.

- A) A qualified rehabilitation counselor is defined as counselor with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or related field such as guidance and counseling. Having a master's degree in an unrelated field is no longer sufficient for entry-level employment as a rehabilitation counselor. An unrelated master's degree is defined as a special education degree, social work degree, etc. Currently employed counselors with master's degrees in unrelated fields must complete all course work they are lacking which demonstrates they have attained the educational requirements consistent with the Certified Rehabilitation Counseling (CRC) standards by year 2005. If

they do not attain such educational standards they will relinquish their title of "counselor" and be assigned duties consistent with their skills, educational training and experiences. They will not make eligibility determination decisions or be involved in plan development/amendments, closure or authorizations without the assistance of a qualified rehabilitation counselor.

- B) A vocational technical teacher and instructor employed by the state agency must demonstrate that they are qualified in their respective field by having the appropriate educational degree or work experience, teaching methodology course work or seminar and attend, at least every five years, an in-service training program on disability sensitivity, informed choice issues and reasonable accommodations for the classroom.
- C) A qualified rehabilitation assistant is a staff who annually attends all training programs, which they and their respective supervisor have deemed necessary.

The steps MRS is planning to take to assure that qualified staff are hired or current staff attain the level of being qualified are:

- 1) provide on-going training to all district managers and site managers meeting on appropriate hiring procedures;
- 2) provide funding for staff seeking to take needed course work to attain the level of qualified counselor. An RSA long-term training grant has been awarded to MRS with the project beginning on October 1, 1999. The amount of this grant is \$927,346.00 over five years. Combining this grant with in-service training dollars will provide the needed funding to attain the desired outcomes of the CSPD plan;
- 3) maintain a database for monitoring staff's progress toward attaining the level of being "qualified";
- 4) perform an annual training needs assessment of all staff which include training opportunities needed by the vocational technical teachers to attain the level of qualified i.e. disability sensitivity, informed choice, and identifying reasonable accommodations; and
- 5) establish an electronic bulletin board listing private sector training programs available;
- 6) to draw national applicant pool of potential rehabilitation counselors, MRS will continue to post all counselor employment vacancies with the Rehabilitation Recruitment Center: National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials electronic bulletin board;

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7) maintain paid internships for graduates of CORE accredited graduate programs.

Section 4.11(b)(4)

Regulation: standards to ensure the availability of personnel within the designated State unit or other individuals who are, to the maximum extent feasible, trained to communicate in the native language or mode of communication of an applicant or eligible individual;

Compliance Strategy:

MRS has taken the initiative to hire qualified counselors who are bi-lingual in Spanish or Arabic if the local community has a large population of such ethnic groups. Each office has also posted agency information in English, Spanish, or Arabic, clarifying that bilingual counselors and program materials are available in customer's native language. Also, each office has posted agency information in English and Spanish clarifying that bilingual counselors and program materials are available in customer's native language. Also, materials are available in Braille and other accessible forms, as requested by customer. Qualified sign language interpreters are contracted with on an as needed basis except at the agency's technical school where interpreters hold FTE positions. The definition of a qualified interpreter in the State of Michigan is found on page 2 of this document.

Personnel are also trained to understand the following agency policy, which indicates a further commitment to communicating in a customer's native language:

MRS 1.0125 CLIENT INFORMED CHOICE
....Applicants and eligible individuals shall be informed through appropriate means of communication, about the availability and scope of informed choice....

Section 4.11(b)(5)

Regulation: staff development to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training 34 CFR 361.18(d);

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Compliance Strategy:

POLICY REFERENCE

According to the State of Michigan's Civil Service three year Strategic Plan dated April 2000, the state of Michigan has continued its commitment to having a well-trained and effective workforce in state government.

PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

To ensure that all rehabilitation personnel, especially professional and paraprofessional staff, are appropriately and adequately trained and prepared, a statewide training needs assessment is being compiled from January through March 2004. Topics suggested are drawn from the CRC knowledge domains and agency position descriptions i.e. essential job functions for each job position. Also, topics are representative of RSA priorities and the emerging trends in each staff member's profession. Reviewing the current Institute on Rehabilitation Issue documents as well as the RSA priorities assures that the needs assessment is representative of current research findings. The current RSA priorities are viewed as informed choice, rehabilitation technology, the Rehabilitation Act as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act, IDEA and Social Security work incentives.

CURRENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Following is a summary of the most frequent identified training needs for FY 05 to date. Due to the implementation of an automated case management system, software-training needs are evaluated as an on-going process.

Table V:
2004 Training Needs

Counseling Topics	Managerial/Supervisory Topics	Organizational Topics
Job Placement Strategies	Ticket to Work Legislation	Establishing Systems that Assures Accountability
Borderline Personality	Negotiation Skills	Building A Service Delivery System which Values Cultural Competency
Plan Development	Budget/DAFR Reports	Getting Desired Outcomes from Work Teams
Transferable Skills Assessment	Team Building	Developing the Desired Agency Culture
Using Automated Case Management System to Produce Local Production Reports	Hearings/Appeals	Staffing Criteria
Ticket To Work and Social Security Work Incentives et al	Leadership Skills And Team Building	
Working Effectively with Special Populations and Culturally Diverse Clients	Using the Automated Case Management Performance Reports	
Assistive Technology and the Severely Disabled	Coaching others	

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In FY 2004, three training/organizational development initiatives continued which reflect MRS's further compliance to ensure that all personnel employed receive appropriate and adequate training. They are:

- 1) Training Academy: The New Staff Training Academy was developed for new counselors and newly hired contract staff. This series provides an overview to the history of the public rehabilitation program and process, cultural diversity issues, agency values, and informed choice. It teaches the Rehabilitation Process with best practice utilizing the automated case management system.
- 2) The School of Leadership continues with 24-30 staff will be involved in FY 05. This school meets four times a year with structured learning activities, which encourage the development and expression of leadership. These 24 participants were selected from all levels of employment within the agency and not just management. This development of leadership is seen as an important element in succession planning. To date, 148 employees have participated in this school. Alumni activities will be provided to continue leadership growth opportunities.
- 3) We also are offering a series of training programs for the agency's other newly promoted managers.

MRS is also currently involved in an organizational culture change process, which involves identifying and using the levers of change that each office needs to address to build capacity toward a customer and employee friendly and satisfying workplace. The culture change will have relevance for staff capacity building, reorganization, and issues of succession planning. Cultural integration activities with Governor and Departmental values have been added in FY 05.

The funding of other training activities is through the RSA in-service training grant funds supplemented through Title I dollars. These funds are allocated to the central office for statewide initiatives as well as to local offices and divisions so that local training opportunities are easily coordinated. Staff is also encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities offered by their respective professional organizations and with their community partners.

Section 4.11(b)(6)

Regulation: coordination of its personnel development system with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Section 673).
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Compliance Strategies:

The intent of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Section 673 is two fold.

- 1) to help address State-identified needs for qualified personnel in special education, related services, early intervention, and regular education, to work with children and disabilities; and
- 2) to ensure that those personnel have skills and knowledge, derived from practices that been determined, through research and experience, to be successful, that are needed to serve those children.

MRS has a long partnership with the public school system including a formalized interagency agreement between the Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services and MRS. This interagency agreement has been updated and addresses interdepartmental training issues.

MRS has a current statewide initiative of providing quality transition services to youth. In response to this statewide business direction, training programs are development which include the participation of the transition coordinators, intermediate school district staff, personnel from the assistive technology centers and MRS. Also, staff from these various partners have been included as participants in the new counselor training academy series.

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Attachment 4.12: Assessments; Annual Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Reports of Progress

Att. 4.12(a): Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessments of the Rehabilitation needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs.

MRS contracted with the Michigan State University (MSU) Office of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies for FY 2005 to perform further needs assessment along with the current program evaluation activity. Recently, with the combining of MRS and Michigan's Commission for the Blind into the same department, our two agencies have decided to collaborate so that the needs assessment is state-wide for all persons with disabilities. MSU is now working with both state units toward that effort. A proposed program plan is under development.

The agency, in collaboration with the Michigan Rehabilitation Council and the Michigan Commission for the Blind, conducted a comprehensive, statewide assessment of the needs of persons with disabilities, including the needs of individuals with disabilities who may be served by the Michigan Works! System in FY'02, with publication of the Needs Assessment in FY 2003. This process involved several phases: (1) determination of the most appropriate method by which to survey persons with disabilities, (2) identification of an appropriate and comprehensive survey instrument, and (3) survey of persons with disabilities by various demographic variables (e.g., race, gender, age, county, primary disability, severity of disability, etc.). Criteria were set forth to assure that specific and adequate information was collected that addressed (1) the prevalence rates of significant population characteristics; (2) the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, especially their need for supported employment; (3) the needs of individuals disabilities who are minorities; (4) individuals who have been un-served and under-served by the vocational rehabilitation program, as well as accountability of the state workforce investment system; and (5) the accessibility of rehabilitation programs. The results from the needs assessment provides quantitative and qualitative data for determining continuous improvement opportunities for the agency and its community partners to improve and/or further develop needed community rehabilitation and employment programs and services. The complete statewide needs assessment report is available from the agency (contact Harold Wasner).

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In addition to the statewide needs assessments described above, the agency continues to utilize a variety of methods by which to obtain information pertaining to the needs of individuals with disabilities in the state. Disability Voice (Town Hall) meetings have been held at various locations throughout the state to obtain feedback about the needs of individuals with disabilities in the local communities, and ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of the rehabilitation program is occurring on an annual basis through the 1) administration of a customer satisfaction survey; 2) monthly assessment of the agency's attainment of the RSA performance indicators; and (3) provision and analysis of data related to the agency strategic initiatives. Recommendations continue to be made to the automated case management enhancement team and further training of counselors regarding data entry is being designed with an emphasis on the accuracy of data the counselor enters which generates the "RSA 911" data.

In FY 2006, MRS will be updating an Issue Sweep/Environmental Scan with our community partners and established process to further enhance such partnerships.

Att. 4.12(b): Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services.

- 1) An estimated 9.3% or 583,000 of civilian, non-institutionalized men and women aged 18-64 in Michigan reported having a disability in 2003. Disability was defined as a "health program or disability which prevents them from working or which limits the kind or amount of work they can do."

Data from this same time period shows 199,000 or 34.1% of the civilian, non-institutionalized men and women aged 18-64 were employed. It can be estimated that 384,000 or 65.9% of Michigan residents with disabilities are unemployed and potentially eligible for services. (These figures were derived using Houtenville, Andrew J. 2005. "Disability Statistics in the United States." Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, www.disabilitystatistics.org. Posted May 15, 2003. Accessed January 21, 2005)

- 2) Approximately 45,410 individuals were served by Michigan Rehabilitation Services during the 2004 fiscal year. During that same time period 2,357 persons received supported employment services, 1,123 of whom received services funded under Title VI; Part B. It is estimated

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that we will serve approximately 1% additional individuals in each category per year for the time period covered by this plan.

- 3) The cost of services for the estimated number of individuals that could apply for services (excluding program administration costs) is predicted to be \$1,268,736,000. This figure was determined using the estimated number of people that could apply for services (384,000) multiplied by the average case cost (\$3,304.00) for those cases closed during FY 03-04.

Att.4.12(c): State's Goals and Priorities, Including Options Related to the Order of Selection, and Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds.

Order of selection (OSS) is not utilized at this time by MRS. The MRS executive team has annual dialogues on OSS as a possible service delivery strategy for the future.

MRS maintains supported employment programs as a priority to ensure availability of the service to all consumers, especially those with the most significant disabilities, who could benefit from it. Michigan's Title VI, Part B, allocation of \$1,000,000 in case service funds in FY 2005 is expected to provide services to less than fifty percent of the agency's cases in supported employment. The balance of needed caseload funds comes from general caseload funds so demand for supported employment in Michigan continues to exceed Title VI-B resources. The anticipated Title VI, Part B, allocation of approximately \$900,000 is expected for FY 2006.

MRS plans to serve approximately 1200 persons with significant disabilities utilizing Title VI-B funds in FY 2006. Additional supported employment customers will be served using Title I Section 110 funds. The entire Title VI-B award for FY 2006 will be distributed to district offices in the form of case service funds. The funds will be used primarily to purchase job coaching and transitional employment related service from private, non-profit community rehabilitation programs and psychosocial programs.

The size of Title VI-B awards to individual MRS district offices is based on the number of persons with disabilities in the community. The size of a local supported employment program is largely dependent upon consumer demand for the service, as well as the community's ability to fund the long-term supports necessary to maintain consumers in supported employment. It is

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anticipated that all MRS district offices in FY 2006 will offer supported employment services as a result of either Title VI-B funds, Title I general program funds, and/or expanded cash match agreements with the local community mental health agency.

Local agreements are required for MRS district offices providing supported employment services. Interagency agreements include the following information: 1) roles and responsibilities of respective community agencies including MRS and the entity providing extended supported services; 2) the number of persons to be placed in employment during the period of time covered by the interagency agreement; and 3) an assurance that extended support services will be provided following MRS case closure. The MRS Casework manual contains a policy generally limiting utilization of Title VI-B funds to 18 months for a given client, unless special circumstances warrant extension.

MRS has entered into collaborative relationships with the Michigan Department of Community Health and local community mental health boards to establish flexible service agreements. These cash-match agreements support both the traditional supported employment services for persons with developmental disabilities and psychosocial programs for the chronically mentally ill.

Att.4.12 (d): State Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for
Innovation and Expansion Activities

The agency's strategic priorities stem from identification of the needs of persons with disabilities through public meetings, focus groups, input from consumer organizations, the Michigan Rehabilitation Council (MRC), the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Client Assistance Program (CAP), Assistive Technology Project, and key stakeholders in the community.

During FY 2002, MRS and MCB collaborated in contracting with Abt Associates, Inc., Michigan State University, and the Center for Essential Management Services, Inc., for the first comprehensive statewide needs assessment since 1988. The project employed a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative methodology that utilized a formal direct mail survey of consumers as well as key informant interviews, analyses of extent data, focus groups, and individual interviews. The resulting data were compiled and analyzed, with key findings in terms of demographic information for MRS and MCB, unserved and underserved groups, service needs, and barriers to employment. The consistency of findings across the various target stakeholder groups validated the results obtained and underscored the overall importance and significance

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of the identified needs. The resulting set of needs continue to be used by MRS and MCB in strategic planning processes and program development activities to improve VR and IL services and supports for citizens with disabilities in the state of Michigan.

Annual strategic planning meetings attended by senior managers and MRC members validate the consumer issues and concerns emerging with the change in social structure and economic supports impacting persons with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities in the state. Strategic planning and the annual prioritization of agency goals and expectations is conducted in full partnership with the Michigan Rehabilitation Council (MRC) and our other consumer partners. Strategic planning with consumer representatives and our community partners helps us develop strategies to improve the performance of the state agency in assisting persons with disabilities overcome barriers to equitable access to and participation in the Title I employment program, Title VI Part B supported employment program, and integration into communities. The building of strong relationships with key individuals and organizations in the disability community have raised agency planning to an open, consumer-focused process. Strategic planning has addressed the barriers to equal access and full participation of all individuals with disabilities in the state supported vocational rehabilitation program by implementing the following:

Outreach to minority populations especially those with the most significant disabilities. Field office business plans have provided an assessment of minority populations in the various districts of the state, identified specific minority groups, identified allies in the community to help address the needs of these populations, and have developed local strategies for inclusion of greater numbers of members of these groups as customers, vendors, and as rehabilitation staff. Professional organizations, which address the professional development and hiring of rehabilitation staff, are supported and involved in personnel recruitment and hiring. Staff representing the various minority groups have developed liaisons with minority community leaders, participate in community activities, and are able to address customers in their own language. The agency has a minority issues committee to address equitable access to and services by the vocational rehabilitation program. The committee is developing a database, by district office, of prevalence of the minority groups receiving services in relation to the prevalence of the minority group in the general population. The committee is also addressing a comparison of the services

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received by individuals from the minority groups with those received by non-minority customers. The study is focusing on minority group members with significant disabilities and those with the most significant disabilities. Results of the study will direct outreach strategies and improvements in service equity and employment outcomes.

Integration of assistive technology initiatives into each stage of the vocational rehabilitation system. Stronger collaborative relationships with the Assistive Technology (AT) Project has resulted in periodic statewide training for rehabilitation staff that interact with customers as counselors, rehabilitation aides, or contract staff. Transition Coordinators, who are our partners in the schools, are also invited to participate to encourage a team approach to the provision of AT within the school and rehabilitation systems. Local Community Assistive Technology Project representatives are included to develop stronger vocational rehabilitation linkages to community resources for AT and to foster support of VR staff for the local AT initiatives. This strategy will continue throughout the remainder of the project to build a sustainable AT resource in communities. Local projects within district offices have also supported local projects such as annual AT Expo's and training for customers and employers in the availability of AT equipment and services, and the agency as a resource to consumers, employers, and community partners.

Partnerships have been developed with the MARO Employment and Training Association, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Michigan Association of Centers for Independent Living, and with other private for profit and private non-profit organizations to involve them more fully in the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services at the state and local levels. Through the expansion, development, or improvement of community rehabilitation programs, our partners will assist the state agency in achieving the goals and priorities of the state vocational rehabilitation program. Twenty-nine (29) grants were issued to twenty community rehabilitation organizations for a total of \$983,684 million during FY 2005 to expand and improve community rehabilitation programs. In addition, local agreements and grants with organizations not meeting the community rehabilitation organization criteria were awarded to broaden the availability of services to persons with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities. The priorities for new CRP grants are: "innovative partnerships that promote equitable access for unserved and underserved populations, resulting in quality employment outcomes." Grant goals included development of youth services, business services,

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community-based employment services, services to minority populations, and other projects as defined by agency priorities and local business plan priorities.

Expand the role of community rehabilitation programs in the one-stop workforce investment centers. Partnerships at the state and local levels support the inclusion of community rehabilitation programs as part of the one-stop service delivery centers. Developing relationships as part of the workforce boards and linking the community rehabilitation organizations, as qualified service providers will expand the availability of vocational rehabilitation services in the local service delivery areas. Providing leadership to the workforce development boards in designing service delivery to include persons with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities, is the goal of the department and the agency and has become a priority for the implementation during the next few years. Two grants to community rehabilitation providers, totaling \$55,533, are currently targeted toward assisting integration of services for persons with disabilities with those of the statewide workforce investment system.

Improvements in programmatic and physical accessibility for persons with disabilities in the one-stop system are also occurring in several collaborative activities with the Michigan Works! Association. These include collaborative work done in follow-up to a USDOL accessibility grant and a USDE-funded grant to provide technical assistance to the statewide Michigan Works! system to enhance access and employment outcomes for people with disabilities into this universal one-stop system. MRS continues to be involved in these follow-up activities which include consumer and one-stop agency needs assessment, disability awareness and de-mystification for staff, removal of artificial and real barriers, improving knowledge of resources and systems related to persons with disabilities, assistive technology, and basic accommodations.

Improvement of the performance of the State in regards to performance indicators and evaluation standards. Since FY 2004, the agency has been implementing an agreement with the Employment Service to secure wage data of individuals whose case records the agency closed without successful employment because contact was lost after the provision of IPE services. The use of this wage data has permitted MRS to resume contact with a number of agency customers with the results of improving employment outcomes and rehabilitation rates.

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No new I&E projects were funded for FY 2005 to accommodate a shift in funds from MRS to Michigan Commission for the Blind. No new I&E projects will be funded in FY 2006.

Att.4.12 (e): Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

Reports of progress and success in the achievement of evaluation standards and performance indicators and the agency's strategic goals and priorities under Title I were made to the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth and the Michigan Rehabilitation Council in November 2003 and February 2004. MRS and the Michigan Rehabilitation Council have not yet submitted a joint report to the Commissioner regarding the development and review of annual goals and priorities under Title I, but plan to do so at the end of this fiscal year.

Innovation and Expansion (I&E) grants are awarded for projects that develop or expand innovative approaches to serving persons with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities. I&E grant programs support the agency's program priorities and district operational plans. They reflect a commitment to research, development, and systems change. They also emphasize community and statewide partnerships.

For FY 2005, Michigan Rehabilitation Services awarded ten I&E grants to ten local and statewide organizations, totaling \$273,225. The priority was "Innovations that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of rehabilitation service delivery, leading to achievement of employment outcomes for youth, Social Security recipients, and individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds." Two of these projects, totaling \$78,626 (29%), were directed toward outreach to persons with disabilities who are minorities, or have been traditionally unserved or underserved with the outcome of overcoming barriers to equitable access to vocational rehabilitation services and supported employment programs. These projects, focus on ethnic minority groups, including Hispanics and African Americans.

Two FY 2005 I&E projects are helping students to make the transition from school to work. One projects is supporting community-based employment services and three are providing business services. One project is focusing on integration with Michigan Works! The remaining project is addressing the special needs of Social Security recipients.

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Evaluation of the I & E grant projects for FY 2003 indicates for the most part that the projects are achieving or surpassing stated goals and priorities. The FY 2004 grant evaluation is currently underway. Preliminary findings indicate the majority of these have also achieved stated goals and priorities. If goals and priorities were not achieved, grantees and their district offices have the option of discontinuing the project, re-planning with partner agencies to modify the strategies based on knowledge and data gathered to date, or modifying the project to provide more realistic outcomes for the target population or for the community. The agency completed an in-depth, external evaluation of an I&E project supporting establishment of an assistive technology assessment center in the U.P. The evaluation focused on eight macro-level factors, including value-added, collaboration, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. The agency is launching an external evaluation of four projects serving minority populations to determine how MRS can better serve and meet the needs of persons with disabilities from these groups.

Pursuant to 361.35(a)(2), during FY 2005, the agency provided the Michigan Rehabilitation Council with \$290,581 from Title I to support the funding of the resource plan for the Council's operations, and provided the State Independent Living Council with \$220,307 from Title I to support the funding of the resource plan for the Council's operations.

Attachment 6.9: Participation of Individuals in Cost of Services
Based on Financial Need. (Section 12(c) of the
Act; 34 CFR 361.54)

- 6.9(a) No financial needs test is applied and no financial participation is required as a condition for furnishing the following vocational rehabilitation services: (1) assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services, except those services that are provided during an exploration of the individual's ability, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations, consistent with the requirements of sections 7(2)(D) and 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act; (2) assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs; (3) counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice; (4) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through cooperative agreements under section 101(a)(11) of the Act and subsection 4.9 of this State plan, if such services are not available under this State plan; and (5) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.
- 6.9(b) However, the agency plans to consider the financial need of eligible individuals, or individuals who are receiving services during an exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations consistent with the first paragraph of this subsection, in order to determine the extent of the individual's participation in costs of post-secondary training services.
- 6.9(c)(1) The agency plans to have written policies on the determination of financial need for post-secondary training that are consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.54. These policies will be applied uniformly to all individuals in similar circumstances and ensure that the level of the individual's participation in the cost of vocational rehabilitation is: (1) reasonable; (2) based on the individual's financial need, including the consideration of any disability-related expenses paid by the individual; and (3) not

so high as to effectively deny the individual a necessary service.

6.9(c)(2) Specific services for which the designated State unit has a financial needs test.

The Agency plans to implement a needs test, consistent with the congressional methodology established in the Higher Education Act, for any applicable post-secondary education and training, in connection with an individual's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), development of an IPE, trial work experience, or extended assessment.

Individuals who seek Agency financial support for post-secondary education or training will be required to annually apply for student financial aid using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and accept any grants, need based scholarships or tuition waivers for which they may be eligible.

The agency will not replace the expected family contribution, as determined by federal formula in the FAFSA, in contributing toward the individual's cost of attendance at a post-secondary institution.

Individuals who are eligible for Social Security benefits under Title II or XVI (SSDI or SSI) will be required to make maximum effort to secure financial aid through post-secondary financial aid resources, but Agency financial support for post-secondary training under an IPE, as pertains to Social Security Title II or Title XVI benefits, will not be conditioned on a needs test. Furthermore, personal assistance services required in direct connection with post-secondary training as part of an IPE, and auxiliary aids and services that are not the responsibility of the post-secondary institution and are the responsibility of the Agency under an IPE, will be exempt from needs testing.

Cost of attendance for eligible Agency customers attending Michigan Career and Technical Institute will be excluded from financial needs testing.

Attachment 7.3: Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported
Employment Services

Title VI-B funds continue to be fully expended and represent approximately 43% of all funds expended on supported employment. Persons with mental retardation continue to comprise the largest group served, followed by people with mental illness.

Local programs continue to offer a variety of supported employment services to persons with the most significant disabilities. Agreements with the schools and community mental health systems partners form the basis of most supported employment programs. Services through these agreements include, but are not limited to individual placement, psychosocial rehabilitation via clubhouse programs, job coaching, job referral, job development, job placement, and long term follow along. Some programs include enclaves and short-term trial work experiences to assist the consumer in making an informed choice in selecting a vocational goal. Collaborating with a local mental health agency, state agency field offices participate in team meetings with the consumer where person-centered planning is used as part of a job readiness component toward selecting a vocational objective and identifying services needed to assist the individual in reaching his/her goal.

The state agency and the state Department of Community Health-Mental Health Division, along with local MRS Districts and CMH Service Providers, work together to organize, plan, deliver, and fund supported employment as one method to strengthen vocational program options for persons with significant disabilities, providing persons with disabilities the opportunity to achieve desirable vocational outcomes. The two agencies collaborated in the development of Guidelines for Supported Employment document, which provides guidance for local partners to develop and implement vocational opportunities for mutual customers. These guidelines identify federal standards for supported employment programs sponsored by MRS, and procedures for coordination of services, especially transition to extended support services after MRS services are provided and for the duration of the placement. The interagency agreement describes the transition from MRS services to extended services to occur when the worker has stabilized in employment (job coaching is utilized 25% or less time for the worker on the job), and the worker has substantially met the goal for the number of hours of employment in the IPE. MRS Policies for Supported Employment were updated in FY 2005. The Guidelines for Supported Employment are in the

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process of being reviewed due to revisions in State Mental Health, Medicaid, and MRS service delivery policies.

The state agency field offices will continue to implement transitional employment policies emphasizing local partnership agreements with community mental health and school programs.

The vocational rehabilitation counselors associated with local career preparation/transition services programs, have acknowledged the need for schools, parents, and community partners, including community mental health programs, to focus on providing vocational planning earlier in the education process. Schools need to be aware of supported employment options and issues. Parents lack understanding of systems, particularly the diminished supports available after a child reaches the age of majority.

There is recognition that different strategies and support services are needed for this population. Youth require longer job coach utilization. Parents request more training in the IEP and transition plan development and look to the schools to provide this. The Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Department of Education, Special Education and Early Intervention Services, and the Department of Community Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division, will continue their collaboration efforts to forge a partnership at the state level to address these issues as a necessary component of supported employment service delivery.

The Department of Community Health is engaged in a revision of the funding structure that may substantially change the availability and structure of funding for CMH provided services. Continuing collaboration at the field and state level is intended to minimize significant impact to populations that are receiving supported employment services.

There has been an increase in community agreements and grants for transitional services planning for youth with disabilities preparing to exit schools and enter the work force. These agreements and grants included a strong emphasis on service delivery and community supports by way of tri-party or three way agreements with the community mental health agency, the state agency, and the intermediate school district in order to provide for job coaching and other support services.

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The MARO Employment and Training Association and the Michigan Rehabilitation Association (MRA), annually co-sponsor a statewide Michigan Rehabilitation Conference. The conference continues to include several workshops on supported employment issues and transition to employment of youth with disabilities as it relates to supported employment programming strategies and best practices.